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ABSTRACT

This work is one in a series that focuses on nine languages representing the bulk of the second language learning effort in Australian education (Arabic, Modern Standard Chinese, French, German, Modern Greek, Indonesian/Malay, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish). These languages were categorized as the Languages of Wider Teaching. This particular work describes the prominence of the French language in modern language teaching in Australia and the criticism this prominence has attracted; one of the tasks of this report is to address the place of French among other languages in Language Other Than English (LOTE) provision policy. Topics addressed include French in education; immersion and bilingual programs, and primary and secondary partial immersion programs; teacher training, curriculum, and materials. An attitudinal survey is described that examines the drop in enrollment for French language instruction between Years 10 and 11. Survey findings focus on the reasons for discontinuing and for continuing French. Students reported that the most important reason for discontinuing French was that other subjects were considered more important. There is some evidence to support the idea that students continue French studies for integrative reasons. Profiles of French in postsecondary education, French in specialist professional training (e.g., business, engineering), and Australia's French-speaking population are provided. Appendices contain references, a list of colleagues consulted, and attitudinal survey form. (Contains 127 references.) (JP)

ED 365 113

Unlocking Australia's Language Potential

Profiles of 9 Key Languages in Australia

Vol. 3 - French

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PROFILES OF 9 KEY LANGUAGES IN AUSTRALIA

Volume 3: French

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Preface

One of the consequences of the increased emphasis on language policy making from state and federal governments in recent years has been the proliferation of ways of categorising languages. The nine languages featured in these profile studies were categorised as Languages of Wider Teaching.

There are obviously other ways in which the languages could have been classified. Any one of a large number of possible categories could have been used but this particular group of nine was listed in the National Policy on Languages as languages which either already had or could reasonably be predicted to have the majority of all languages candidates in Australia.

This particular group of languages could not otherwise be classified together. They represent therefore the vast bulk of the second language learning effort in Australian education. As such these languages consume the greatest proportion of the resources devoted to the teaching of second languages in this country and will do so for several years to come.

In addition to this quantitative rationale for grouping these nine the following rationale supported this selection:

- that language/teaching efforts are to be harmonised with Australia's economic, national and external policy goals;
- that language teaching and learning efforts are to enhance Australia's place in Asia and the Pacific and its capacity to play its role as a full and active member of world forums; and
- that, for planning purposes, resources allocation efforts and the establishment of achievable long-term goals, choices must be made on language issues. (National Policy on Languages 1987:124)

These nine were seen to combine internally orientated reasons for language study (intercultural, community bilingualism rationales) with perceived externally oriented reasons (economic and international relations rationales) with a pragmatic sense that only a selection from the very many possible languages that could be promoted, should be.

The nine languages selected were: Arabic, Modern Standard Chinese, French, German, Modern Greek, Indonesian/Malay, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish. In early 1990 the Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education which was charged with the responsibility for the implementation of the National Policy on Languages decided to review the teaching and place of these languages since their designation as Languages of Wider Teaching. Funding was provided under the Australian Second Language Learning Program for the conduct of profile studies of the nine.

The NLLIA was successful in its bid for these funds and co-ordinated a national project of the research teams described in the volumes. The researchers and the teams that assisted them were scattered across Australia and the co-ordination of their efforts was a major activity on its own. I wish to acknowledge the efforts of Dr. Tony Liddicoat and Mr. Athol Yates and other NLLIA staff for succeeding in this difficult task.

In addition, the NLLIA is producing a summary volume. This will present an overview of the nine language profiles and an analysis of the most interesting and revealing differences and similarities among them. This is being written by Dr. Paulin Dijité of the University of Sydney.

These studies represent more than a review of the state of play after some years of designation of these nine languages as key languages. They promise to bring about a more precise and language specific form of planning for the teaching and learning of languages in Australian education and therefore could well represent a more mature phase in policy making itself. In recent years language policies have made only generic statements about individual, or groups of, languages. Since there is now a high level of consensus across Australia about the importance of Asian languages, the necessity of keeping strong European-world languages and the domestic value of multi-lingualism these profiles will probably focus attention on the particular issues that affect the "condition" of individual languages considered important.

The classification, Languages of Wider Teaching is, however, no longer used. In the Australian Language and Literacy Policy issued by the Federal government in September 1991, the Commonwealth identified 14 languages; incorporating the present nine. These fourteen languages were called priority languages. Under the Commonwealth's Priority Languages Incentives Scheme education systems, the States and Territories select eight each as the basis of the funding support they receive from the Commonwealth under the ALLP.

These languages are: Aboriginal Languages, Arabic, Modern Standard Chinese, French, German, Modern Greek, Indonesian/Malay, Italian, Japanese, Spanish, Russian, Thai, Korean and Vietnamese.

It would be desirable to extend the profile analysis contained in these volumes to those languages not presently surveyed. In its work on Russian, the NLLIA is in a strong position to commence a profile analysis of Russian and is considering extending this to Thai, Korean and Vietnamese.

Joseph Lo Bianco
Director, NLLIA
March 1993

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Abbreviations

AFTID	Australian French Trade and Investment Directory
AHFDA	Association of Heads of French Departments in Australia.
AISQ	Association of Independent Schools of Queensland
AISV	Association of Independent Schools of Victoria
AISWA	Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia
ALL	Australian Language Learning (Guidelines)
ALLP	Australian Language Levels Project
ANU	Australian National University
ASLLP	Australian Second Language and Literacy Project
ASLPR	Australian Second Languages Proficiency Ratings
BELC	Bureau pour l'Enseignement de la Langue et de la Civilisation Françaises à l'Etranger
CALL	Computer Assisted Language Learning
CAT	Common Assessment Task
CREDIF	Centre de Recherche et d'Etudes pour la Diffusion du Français
DEET	Department of Education, Employment and Training
DESV	Department of School Education Victoria
ESL	English as a Second Language
FLE	Français Langue Etrangère (French as a foreign language)
HSC	High School Certificate
LACU	Languages and Cultures Unit
LOTE	Language Other Than English
MLTA	Modern Language Teachers Association
MLTAV	Modern Language Teachers Association of Victoria
NaFLaSSL	National Framework for Languages at Senior Secondary Level
NLLIA	National Languages and Literacy Institute of Australia
NPL	National Policy on Languages
PEB	Public Examinations Board
QBSSS	Queensland Board of Secondary School Studies
QCEC	Queensland Catholic Education Commission
QUT	Queensland University of Technology
ROSBA	Review of School Based Assessment
SACEO	South Australian Catholic Education Office
SAISB	South Australian Independent Schools Board
SPDDSEV	School Program Division of Department of School Education, Victoria
SSABSA	Secondary School Advisory Board of South Australia
TAFE	Tertiary and Further Education
TAFETEQ	TAFE Technical Employment Queensland
U of SA	University of South Australia
UNE	University of New England
UNSW	University of New South Wales
UWA	University of Western Australia
UWS	University of Western Sydney
VCAB	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board
VCE	Victorian Certificate of Education
VDEC	Victorian Distance Education Centre

Recommendations

*(Note: items marked * have special application to French)*

Preamble

We endorse the NBEET recommendation for a five-year teacher training program, which should include, for LOTE teachers, a period of in-country experience as recommended by Leal. We also endorse much of what is recommended by Nicholas et al. (1993). In what follows, we specify issues of teacher training that have arisen in this report.

Recommendation 1

That specialised LOTE teacher training is of such crucial importance in the development of a multi-lingual Australia that the NLLIA, together with DEET, be asked to explore the possibilities of establishing a specialised national institution for LOTE teachers, where the resources needed can be marshalled to provide both methodological training and language specialisation of the appropriate level. This institution should offer post-graduate certificates and degrees, over a minimum of two years on the basis of rigorous entry requirements, and should coordinate with the state education authorities for the administration of practicum and issues of professional advancement.

Recommendation 2

That teacher training take account of the need for LOTE teachers to work across the primary-secondary divide.

Recommendation 3

That dual registration (primary and secondary) be made available to LOTE teachers in all States and Territories.

Recommendation 4

That pre-service training include techniques for use in mixed achievement LOTE classrooms.

Recommendation 5

That pre-service training include techniques designed for partial immersion teaching and LOTE across the curriculum.

Recommendation 6

That short-term retraining of LOTE teachers in alternative LOTEs not be regarded as acceptable, and that the practice be discontinued.

Recommendation 7

That there be instituted regular in-service workshops for combined groups of serving primary and secondary teachers with a view to addressing the transition issue.

Recommendation 8

That language-awareness programs in primary and secondary schools not be regarded as an implementation of national LOTE policy.

Recommendation 9

That resources be developed ensuring that LOTE programs at late primary and early secondary allow students to progress beyond the elementary stage of the acquisition of a LOTE.

Recommendation 10

That the cluster (district provisioning) model be adopted and extended in all States and Territories as a means of ensuring continuity of LOTE provision between primary and secondary schools, and that the concentration of resources achieved in this way not be allowed to result in the reduction of the range of LOTEs available in any district or region.

Recommendation 11*

In view of the fact that partial immersion programs have been operating successfully at the junior secondary level for some years, this model should no longer be regarded as experimental. Accordingly, we recommend that administrators in all systems of education in the States and Territories examine the possibility of establishing programs of this kind in the near future.

Recommendation 12*

That the partial immersion program of Camberwell Primary School be the subject of a longitudinal study with a view to establishing research data on primary immersion teaching in Australian conditions.

Recommendation 13*

That further programs on the model of the partial immersion programs of Camberwell and Telopea Park Primary Schools be introduced in other States and Territories.

Recommendation 14

That universities be encouraged to develop further the possibility for students to combine professional degrees with LOTE study.

Recommendation 15

That appropriately specific proficiency descriptors be developed for each language of wider teaching.

Recommendation 16

In view of the dangers we have discerned in the tendency to conflate curricular objectives with proficiency levels, we recommend that proficiency testing be held separate from university exit examinations.

Recommendation 17

That the NLLIA be empowered and funded to administer LOTE proficiency testing.

Recommendation 18*

That the AHFDA take responsibility for coordinating the range of curricular offerings at university level and arranging for students to be fully informed about what courses are available in which institutions. This applies to both undergraduate and post-graduate students.

Recommendation 19

That Austudy and scholarship provision (eg. post-graduate course-work awards) be made available for the purposes of Recommendation 18.

1.0 Introduction

"The history of modern language teaching [in Australia] is virtually the history of the teaching of French" wrote Hick (1964:iii). Indeed, the place of French in this country is such that it seems inevitably to raise its head in any discussion of foreign languages. This prominence has a historical dimension which cannot be ignored, based as it is on a long reign when it was the modern language with which most Australians had contact. At the same time, this prominent position can leave French rather exposed to criticism.

1.1 French in Public Debate

In 1991, the Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade conducted an inquiry into Australia's relations with the republics of Latin America. Questions of LOTE policy and practice in Australia arose many times throughout proceedings, frequent references being made to the importance of Spanish. During these discussions, French was also mentioned more than once, not for any importance it may have in Latin America, but for the role that it is seen to play in the Australian educational system. Just how did the question of French arise, and what was said about it? One senator talked about the need to increase Australia's efforts in Spanish teaching, but immediately supposed that this would require us to "cut back in the teaching of some other languages in Australia". "Is that the way to go?" he asked, addressing his colleagues, and Prof. David Ingram of the C.A.L.L. (1991:II,1161). Ingram replied forcefully that it was not, and began to give reasons why, but the senator maintained the same line, and went on to name the "other" language he had in mind: "One of our colleagues who is not on this committee was in the press three weeks ago calling for French to be reduced" (1991:II,1164). The problem, for the questioner, was presumably not that French should be taught at all, but that what he called "a stupendous fraction" of the nation's LOTE teaching effort should be devoted to that language. "(H)ow can we bring Spanish up to the level you say by the turn of the century if one language is already taking up a quarter of the total?"

This question seems to be based on a clear recognition of the economic constraints governing education policy, but it is not strictly logical. In particular, it supposes that the teaching of French has to be "reduced" in order for progress to occur, when in fact only 11.68% of Year 12 students learn a LOTE in any case (*Australia's Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy* [henceforth *DEET 1991*] 1991: 68 (The figure is for 1990)). Professor Ingram did not bother to point out the ambiguity, but merely insisted: "In no way can one play down the importance of French. With the developments in Europe, to suggest that French is of no significance is just crazy" (1991:II, 1165). Another member of the committee, whose knowledge of language policy appeared more subtle and more detailed than that of some of his colleagues, made the point that French was likely to be one of Australia's six most important languages (1991:II, 1178). He and Professor Ingram alluded briefly to the reasons for this, and part of the role for the present volume is to set them out more fully.

Before doing so, however, we need to set them in the context of such current discussion of the role of French as occurred in the Senate inquiry. Another member of the Standing Committee launched a veritable attack on French, and the terms of his attack, to the extent that they are shared by others in positions of influence, reveal the particular problems now facing French within the domain of LOTE policy. He began, as had his colleague, with the economic question. When resources are limited, "who makes the decision whether you teach Spanish, Indonesian, Mandarin or French?" (1991:II,1173). This is an important question, and requires a careful, complex, answer. The unfortunate thing is that he began to answer his own question in a way that was anything but careful. He signalled his agreement with the Senate colleague who had brought up "this French thing". His impatience with French was supported by a personal anecdote:

> I think one of the reasons we have got into this problem is that I spent four years doing French but I have never used it since except when I went to France 20 years after and tried to use it: it was a complete failure. If I had learnt Japanese or something that was relevant to the area that I live in - or Spanish even - I might have built the culture to a foreign language a lot more". (1991:II,1175)

What was called, in this discussion, "this French thing" should be the starting point of this report, for it encapsulates most of the misconceptions about the language and its place in Australian education. His opinion:

- is based on old experience (answered by Ingram II, 1176).
- supposes that what was taught in French at school was aimed at travel to France.
- supposes that LOTE knowledge can be held intact for 20 years without maintenance.
- supposes that the same thing would somehow not have occurred if he had learnt Japanese or Spanish at the same stage of his life, and in the same way.

French is not the only language in this position. Most of what is said about it in this way can be said about German, or even Italian. But French seems to be in a special position, attracting attacks from those very people who have a general belief in the value of LOTE teaching, and a desire to see it further developed in Australia.

The comments made in the Senate regarding French refer to the relatively long, and uninterrupted, history of "French in Australia". "This French thing" is something like an unexamined tradition in Australian education, and some of the debate around LOTE policy takes the form of putting French, so to speak, in its place. One way of understanding the views we have cited from the Senate committee is that this tradition is seen as incongruous in the Australian context, and that policy directions should be concerned with starting new ones. A task we shall address in this report will be to examine the tradition of French in Australia, in an attempt to map its history. Rather than see it as a language so foreign that it should be expelled from our culture altogether, or as a tradition so dated that the language might just as well be dead for present purposes, we shall represent French as a living tradition within other Australian cultural and educational traditions: as such, it is by definition susceptible of change and adaptation. We shall

show that the history of French in Australia is in fact a history of change, and considerable innovation: this vitality is taken for granted within the profession of French teaching, and very little known outside of it. Nevertheless, LOTE professionals are in no need of reminding that French teaching has been instrumental in some of the major policy initiatives of the past two decades. Well-known figures in French in South Australia were instrumental in the formulation of *Voices for the Future*, which Ian Laurie calls "the first language policy document ever to receive formal approval by any Government Department" in Australia, as they were in the early stages of the ALL project.

> ◆ Ian Laurie writes (personal communication) concerning the role played by French teachers in widening the range of languages taught in Australia, as follows:
>
> "In South Australia, at least, I observe that during the period 1965 onwards, it was French teachers who, more than any other group, were active in promoting other languages in their schools, universities, on the old Public Examinations Board and subsequently SSABSA. This may well have occurred because so many of them were of non-English-speaking origins. You name the language subject committee on the PEB, then SSABSA and you are likely to find that some loyal French teacher got that language going in the formal educational system: Italian, Spanish, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Latvian, Dutch, and I could go on". Stressing that "the French teachers" provided both the methodological and curricular skills, and "the human resources to carry it all out", he notes the example of French at Flinders University: "with only four members of staff ... we were the only university in the country to teach Latvian, Occitan and, later, Romanian". ◆

Expressions such as "this French thing" testify to a remarkable fact about French in Australia: that is, that "French" refers both to a highly familiar object ("excuse my parley-voo", "merci bucket", "don't say 'good-bye,' say 'au revoir'" and so on) and to an object about which most Australians, with some justification, claim to know very little. This is only apparently paradoxical: the widespread use of French expressions, or of images connoting Frenchness, in advertising, the arts, restaurant and café life, the fashion industry, suggests that French is "the familiar foreign" - just different enough to serve as a selling gambit. To tag an object as "French" is to tag it as not homely, not what mother cooked, not provincial; and at the same time, as not exotic, not weird, not really foreign; so well-known that we don't need to spend time or effort getting to know it; so safe that it presents no problems of cultural understanding; so familiar that it is hackneyed, and can be forgotten, mocked, or overlooked. At the same time, however, school experiences are the other place in which French is typically encountered: in the class-room, the language, and hence the culture, are taught on the assumption that they *do* require effort, that they are genuinely foreign, not easily assimilated into our habits. This irreducible difference is the experience, in particular, of the intractable *sounds* of French, the discomfort that many school-aged children feel at having to "put on an accent". It is in these two modes specifically - in advertising and prestige consumerism, and at school - that "French" has

typically entered Australian life, and it is these two sets of connotations that inhabit "this French thing".

In this way, French can be directly contrasted with some of the languages that have known very voguish upsurges in interest of recent years: usually *unfamiliar* and able to function as exotic, these languages - Russian and Chinese in the 1960s, Indonesian in the 1970s, Japanese in the 1980s and Spanish in 1992 (Expo-Seville, the Barcelona Olympics, the Columbus quincentenary) - have the allure of the unknown. Unfamiliar, they can attract to themselves sets of connotations to do with practicality, regional relevance, important trade markets, and so on; they do not have to do battle with connotations that have been established in our everyday culture through the long tradition of knowing-and-not-knowing French.

It is this tradition that makes it difficult to give a simple answer to questions concerning the "value" of learning French. Manifestly, it has *no* value for those millions of Australians who have failed over the years to learn it effectively at school. The very fact that for many years, French was the modern foreign language most widely taught has the serious public relations consequence that the experience of failure to learn languages is easily, and as it were automatically, associated with learning French. Had French been *less* important in the traditional school offerings, it would be the topic of fewer sad stories; it would have no bad reputation to undo; and it would be easier to locate it as one among the variety of LOTEs available to the current generation. As it is, French is a problem because it has not been seen to be a problem: so taken for granted within our school programs, it does not need to be supported and is perhaps, for a portion of the population, better forgotten. So closely associated with prestige consumer goods and the arts, it can be acquired with money, on labels and menus, without the least effort. In both these ways, as a problematic set of memories and an unvalued fixture, as the language that is too hard, and as the language that is able to be purchased, it is difficult for French to acquire the status in public discourse in Australia of a useful set of skills. Precisely because there is such a well established tradition of "French in Australia", people have difficulty seeing the useability of the language.

Nevertheless, French is not a school subject or a designer label; it is a language in the same ways as any language is a language. What the teaching of French in the Australia of the 1990s must address is how to make this claim good *in the classroom*. This is the paradoxical situation of all language teaching. Particularly in cases where access to a community of native speakers is restricted, as in the case of French, the danger is that a learner's experience of the early years of instruction would give it a status similar to that of elementary physics or ancient history: a school subject, most of whose details can be forgotten without practical loss, the source of fragmentary memories that become the standard allusions or the jokes of people who have been through the same mill: pass the beurre, au-vwah. One of our tasks in this report will be to show how the very vitality of French teaching in this country is addressing this practical problem, how French is becoming a language again in innovative programs of instruction in evidence in every state.

The place of French in Australia is predominantly, but not solely, its place in education. This report will examine French in education, setting this in

relation with the other areas of Australian life in which French has a presence. It will be concerned as well with Australia's response to the contemporary status of French in the world. We will find it necessary to interpret the history of French in Australia, not because we want to write such a history in itself, but because the position French holds today cannot be explained apart from its historical dimension: and the effective elaboration of any future policy can only be founded on a solid understanding of how French has come to occupy the position it does.

Any attempt to examine what is really happening in the French classroom, in various forms of cultural activity, or even in trade with French-speaking countries, has to take account of the "French thing", and the ways in which it can polarise discussion. There are French teachers and administrators who speak of the imminent demise of the language they love, hounded from state secondary schools by Japanese, while many policy-makers continue to call for a better balance between European and Asian languages, on the assumption, apparently, that French is still taking up too much space. Is French in fact still the most widely taught language? In the senior secondary systems, yes. In state junior secondary schools, such as Queensland's, where Japanese is well established, definitely not. In independent schools, on the other hand, especially girls' schools, French is thriving. Alliance Française and other informal courses often find their student numbers continuing to rise at rates of 20% and 30% from year to year. The TV Open Learning course, "French in Action", offered through the University of New England, has been an astonishing success. University enrolments in most major centres are buoyant. In some broad, perfectly concrete sense, French is remarkably popular with language learners. Yet even as public enthusiasm for French courses manifests itself in these ways, there are state school teachers, notably in NSW, who are deeply committed to the French language, who have spent half a lifetime teaching it, and who now find themselves disturbed and displaced by dramatic *local* changes in the patterns of LOTE teaching.

Those who deplore the "continuing dominance" of French and those who fear its imminent demise are both, in their own way, victims of the "French thing". The first group fails to measure the complexity of LOTE teaching practice, and the rapid changes going on in certain areas, while the second group often seems to consider that the only place for French is its traditional place. In order to understand the issues in other, more helpful terms, we need to reflect on the notion of "balance".

1.2 The Issue of Balance

One of the tasks of this report will be to address the place of French among other languages in LOTE provision policy. From a preponderant place in curricula in the first half of this century, French has seen a considerable decline in its enrolments at secondary level. The tendency was noted early, by Wykes (1958:177-8 and throughout), who records diminishing numbers of students taking the Leaving and Matriculation examinations in French in New South Wales and Victoria in the ten years following the end of World War II. Some of these clients were lost to a rise in sentiment against modern language learning in that period; others were lost in favour of increasing

enrolments in German and Italian. Recently, the trend has been more marked, with French suffering from the stress on "community languages", and from the promotion of "business languages", a term largely identified with Japanese. Clyne (1991) writes tellingly of the damage done to LOTE policy by "the unfortunate and continuing atmosphere of competition" among languages, provoked by the use of categories such as these:

> ... in the 1970s ... some people advocated the teaching of 'community languages' rather than 'foreign languages,' with the categories established not on the basis of the goals and methodology of the program but through a politically determined labelling of the language (cf. Clyne 1982: 133-6). [...] the emphasis on community languages alienated teachers of French and Japanese and also a minority of German and Italian teachers. [...] Unfortunately, the term 'business language', often synonymous with Japanese, is now often contrasted with 'community language' or 'foreign language' referring to European languages; and the development of Asian languages is frequently explicitly presented as having to happen at the expense of other languages. (Clyne, 1991:231)

Clyne goes on (1991:231) to quote a prime-ministerial statement to illustrate his point. Pledging funds and government promotion for a "balanced" second language learning program, the prime minister of the day argued against the "artificial distinction" between "economic and community languages, or between Asian and non-Asian languages". We can only applaud the fact that this understanding of the problem has reached the highest level of policy formulation. Yet we must point out that supportive and far-sighted policies such as those that have emerged in recent years are frequently undermined by a history of conceptual confusions that continue to inform the policy briefs. In the statement quoted by Clyne, the use of the term "balance" to describe the program rests on the assumption that the "artificial distinctions" that the statement seeks to deny are in fact maintained, and the categories (economic and community languages, Asian and non-Asian languages) are balanced up against one another. As Clyne points out, discussions of LOTE provision policy are frequently self-contradictory, bearing traces of an "atmosphere of competition" that can only weaken the efforts towards developing "the national asset of multilingualism". (Clyne, 1991:231)

The same problem is evident in policy documents from Queensland, where an energetic program of promotion and support for LOTE teaching in state run schools has been set in place of recent years. It is worth noting that because these policy initiatives are indeed very recent, the debates of the early 1980s, largely between "community" and "international" languages, are less prominent in Queensland discussions than in some of the southern states. They are largely displaced by the "geographical" categories, Asian and European, "East" and "West". (We are led to wonder where Arabic and Hindi, for example, might fit into this neat dichotomy.) In a section of the Ministerial Statement entitled "Balance among languages", the Minister announces that "the Government will concentrate its resources on the development of ... five priority languages" (Braddy 1991:6); these are Japanese, German, Chinese, French and Indonesian. In an attempt to dissociate his policy from the "special interests" that have informed past

discussion of "which languages will be taught in our schools", the Minister acknowledges that "while governments can propose and support languages" and "hope" to produce "a broad balance among Asian and European languages", "in the end it is the parents and students who choose ..." (1991:5)

It is interesting to see how the implementation of this policy is working out on the ground. In the Queensland *Lote Link* of April 1992, the Regional LOTE Coordinator for Metropolitan West records that:

> In our Region we have 25 LOTE clusters. 11 Asian (5 Japanese, 5 Chinese, and one Indonesian combined with South Coast - 4 - 5 clusters are still waiting to come on line with Japanese) and 15 European (11 German and 3 French). With the extra Japanese clusters the balance by 1994 looks like being 50/50 Asian/European. (2)[1]

The French teachers feel more outweighed than "balanced" in an equation such as this. Indeed, it is systematic that German and French are taken together to produce, for example, an overall proportion of LOTE enrolments in "European languages" in the State of 40% (3), but that *between* German and French "balance" is not seen to be a problem. Clearly, the policy on LOTE provision continues to be informed by the "images" of French current in the popular press - "elegance and ease", "high culture and perfume" and so on - rather than by the awareness among language professionals that it has a prominent place "among languages of economic importance to Australia" (Clyne 1991:231), and that it is a language of major importance in regions of the world well outside metropolitan France.

As an example of how the "balance" issue can work out in practice, we take the Hunter region, which has tended to become, for those concerned with the place of French, a focus of concern, not to say a topic of debate. The "Regional Plan for Languages - Vision" (1990) issued by the NSW Department of School Education is in many ways a forward-looking document, and a spur to energetic activity. It speaks of the co-offering of an Asian and a European language within each secondary school, regularly taking as its examples of each group Japanese and German, which it describes as "languages of geopolitical significance". Nowhere does it deny that there may be other such languages, but Japanese and German happen to be the only two that are objects of a regional action plan. French is not specifically excluded, neither in principle nor in practice, but it appears to be (a) taken as fully established and (b) regarded as less urgent for the future. Apparently, French is considered strong enough not to need a regional action plan and/or unimportant enough to justify one. As the assistant director-general pointed out in a very public exchange with his critics, in 1961 there were 63 classes of French being taught in the region, as against 125 Japanese and 52 German. "These figures do not indicate lack of balance", he said rightly (*Newcastle Herald*, 9 Nov. 1991). Furthermore, French is specifically mentioned in the plan as one of the four languages (with Japanese, German, and Latin) to be offered in high schools with language executive positions. French is not forgotten, nor is it persecuted: it is simply not considered to be a domain for "action".

It can be seen readily enough why the talk of balance is so convenient for policy-makers. In the Hunter region, it allows a reasonable-sounding defence

of the suggestion that damage might be done to the teaching of French (or other languages) by a single-minded push for Japanese. Yet one of the weaknesses of the plan, for those with an awareness of the value of French, or Spanish, or Chinese, is that there is no discussion in the policy document of what languages other than Japanese or German might conceivably be "of geopolitical significance", nor of why those two languages are pre-eminently so. Not that the choice of Japanese or German cannot be justified: what is striking is that no attempt is made, or even thought necessary, to justify their choice. In the general comments made about policy options, Japanese and German are merely taken as likely examples of languages that might be targeted. In practice, however, they are the two languages being actively developed, perhaps at some future cost to the other widely-taught language, French.

Examples like that of the Hunter region need to be kept in perspective. They do not constitute any sort of a tragedy for French, especially if some adjoining region were to target, say, French and Chinese, or Spanish and Indonesian with comparable energy. The concern with "balance", whatever that is exactly, could then be situated at a higher level, although it is not clear who would plan such a statewide or nationwide balance. Nor is it clear, at the end of it all, what would have been achieved in practice when some broadly equitable distribution of LOTEs was in place.

The most acute problem raised by regional policy and practice in the Hunter region is not any unreasonable insistence on the value of Japanese and German, but the attempt to establish a kind of Asian-European balance *within the competence* of particular teachers. The regional plan proposes to "ensure that the staff of each secondary school has trained teachers competent to offer both an Asian and a European language". There is some ambiguity of expression here, but the ambiguity has been unfortunately resolved in practice: the intention is clearly that each LOTE teacher who has a European language qualification should also be required to teach an Asian language, and vice versa. When "balance" takes this form for administrative convenience it is close to rank absurdity. In practice, there will be little balance, and very little "vice versa", for Japanese teachers will have no need of French or German, since Japanese teachers are in such short supply. The policy can only mean - and does indeed mean from day to day - that French (and other European language) teachers are expected to retrain as Japanese teachers in a relatively short, arguably inadequate space of time. The consequences of this policy, for teachers in schools, can be quite drastic. The assistant director-general is quite right to say that his department's policies are not simply neglecting European languages, nor tipping the overall balance against them, but the administrative efficiency of being able to allocate teachers to two radically different LOTEs within the staff of one school is bought only at great professional cost. One teacher wrote in the *Newcastle Herald*: "as one of the many resentful, grotesquely untrained Japanese teachers, I cannot help but despair at all the wasted experience and enthusiasm that could have been benefiting our students in other languages taught by teachers who love "their" language and are properly trained in it". (18 Nov. 1991 LOTE policy, it must be remembered, depends finally, for its effectiveness, on the quality of classroom teachers, and on the strength of their commitment to the subject. Even the most energetic policies will lead to nothing if they fail to take account of this simple verity.

The question of "balance" is logically incoherent in a number of ways, but it is of some interest to take it seriously in order to understand how it has come to dominate debate as it does. "Balance" is the happy ending of a narrative that starts with "imbalance" - "happy" because it promises a pattern like the "consensus" of 1980s political discourse, and the cultural equity objectives of multicultural policies. But, as the Queensland *Lote Link* asks: "What is balance? Does it imply balance across regions, across the state, amongst the individual targeted languages or between Asian and European languages?" (p.3). Policy decisions must vary depending on which of these questions predominates.

We quote Clyne again (1991:17) to set the background against which "balance" became an issue in Australian LOTE policy:

> In the late 1950s and early 1960s, French (the language of relatively few migrants) had almost a monopoly as the 'foreign' language in the government sector of education. It was also the main 'foreign' language in non-government schools (Wykes 1966). Where an additional modern language was taught in state schools, it was usually German, generally offered only to those with good results in French, even where the child had a home background in the language. There was little or no response to calls for the introduction of Italian, Russian, (Modern) Greek, and other community languages, and for matching geographically the supply of community language programs with the demand. A system of school zoning, in fact, inhibited this. Some community languages could be taken on Saturday mornings or by correspondence in some states. However, there were in-built discriminatory procedures in the marking of students from native-speaker backgrounds in some Matriculation language examinations (Clyne 1982: 119-20), and many languages were not available for examination because at the time, examinations at Matriculation were dependent on a university department being competent and willing to take responsibility for them. During the period when there would have been a considerable need for bilingual programs, amendments of state education acts passed during World War I still prevented them.

Clyne's account of the historical conditions preceding the introduction of comprehensive LOTE policies in most states allows us to see that these LOTE policies presuppose a narrative of the overthrow of French. It is the story of triumph over an oppressor, with French in the role of Goliath, and other languages - first German, then languages with strong community bases in the major capital cities - in the role of David. It is also the story of the politics of breaking a monopoly. Clyne describes the situation in the mid-1960s in Victoria:

> [...] German was discouraged. Those students with Education Department studentships were advised - in many cases ordered - not to major in German, let alone take honours in it, as it was not a 'teaching subject'. (1991:119)

The Education authorities were out of touch with the real situation. At the time, there were 64 qualified teachers available to teach German outside the schools where it was offered, while the argument was still being made that "German could not be expanded because of a shortage of teaching resources" (Clyne 1991:119). In view of this, it seems that French was being used to do a job on German (as well as on the other languages), but it does not follow that, at the time, any particular positive value was attached to French, or that any great effort was made to expand or enrich it. In this way are villains made. And the villainy of French persists in current debate, where considerable polemical effort is still being expended on getting rid of French (sometimes extended to "European languages"); one would hope it is not greater than the effort devoted to investigating the precise value, and developing the resources, of teaching any specific language.

The narrative of overthrow has a sequel: much of the talk about the place of different LOTEs follows a narrative of progress towards equality. This is the point of the "balance" issue. *DEET 1991* II,71, refers to "disparities" between languages, suggesting by the use of this term that they ought to be redressed. "Slowly eroding" is the expression it uses to project the end of the story. But from the point of view of French, we wonder how "slow" the erosion is, when the reduction of French at Year 12 in New South Wales state secondary schools is currently proceeding at the rate of 25% per annum, measured by number of enrolments.

This erosion does not only affect French. According to *DEET 1991*, three European languages are declining in comparable ways. The figures given are as follows:

	1988	1990
French	21%	17.8%
German	16%	10.5%
Italian	14.8%	12.1%

(DEET 1991:II,71)

Faced with figures such as these, we are led to wonder if the implementation of the policy of "balance" is led more firmly by fashion than by reasoned policy. This is clearly not the desired policy outcome, and *DEET 1991* makes an explicit disclaimer: the intention is not to *decrease* the number of students in a particular LOTE:

> The Government aims to increase the overall number of people studying languages, not to increase some languages at the expense of others. However, the latter may be happening. (1991:II, 71)

The rhetoric of equality is of considerable importance: French (and no doubt German and Italian) cannot afford to ignore it. But we wish to draw careful attention to the way it works in practice. When *DEET 1991* declares that "choice of language is very uneven" (1991:I, 5), we ask in response, why exactly should it be even? This question does not presuppose an answer in the negative; it merely requires a precise rationale. And it should be noted that in the Queensland Ministerial Statement, quoted above, there is some conflict between the rhetoric of equality, and the effects of market forces. Likewise, the case of the Hunter Region shows that the implementation of a

policy directive to encourage the teaching of Asian languages has led effectively to a rejection of equality.

Another way of probing the implications of the notion of "balance" is to investigate the possibilities and problems opened up by the concept of "languages of wider teaching". "Imbalance", presumably, would correspond to developing *one* language into "a language of very wide teaching". This was the sin of French. But the significance of any one language is to be measured against the role of the "languages of wider teaching". After listing the 9 languages in this group from the National Policy on Languages, lo Bianco and Monteil say that "only a few" of them "offer any serious probability that they could perform" this role (1990: ix). Such a judgment suggests that the proper application of policy would not involve an equal division of the field into 9 x 11%, or even into 9 x 10% with 10% residue; there is most likely to be a variety of criteria upon which the "importance" of a language is calculated, and hence a variety of criteria upon which it is "balanced" against the claims of another. This seems to be the kind of decision taken in the Queensland LOTE policy, which reduces the nine languages to five.

In evaluating the effect of policy directives, it is important not to lose sight of the lead time necessary for language teaching to produce its outcomes. If we accept the assessment of Graham Sims (in interview) that there is no doubt that Japanese at the tertiary level is far ahead of any other language in terms of student numbers, and that French continues to be dominant in the secondary system, then it is false to infer that French and Japanese are "balanced". In order accurately to assess the effects of policies of "balance", we should project the current year 7 enrolments forwards. Viewed in this way, the persistently strong place of French looks very precarious. See-saws rarely stay at the horizontal. Nor do they produce sustainable, long-term results.

If the feared decrease in French and other European languages is in fact happening, despite policy intentions, we suggest that the reason for this is to be found in the narrative that we have pointed to: the narrative of overthrow, of the casting down of a villainous oppressor, has only one kind of outcome, failure, or success. The narrative of overthrow, in other words, is at odds with the intended outcome of "balance", and if "balance" is the policy intention, "overthrow" is the way it has often been implemented. There is no doubt that the monopoly of French had to be broken; but it is clear that to tell the story in this way produces different outcomes. For one thing, the breaking of a monopoly does not entail the disablement of its erstwhile holder, merely the reduction of its sphere of influence. For another, it is clear that as a result of the work of the past 20 years, the monopoly of French over language teaching in Australia is definitively over. It is to be hoped, therefore, that the narrative of overthrow can be left firmly in the past; it cannot be a useful part of a forward looking LOTE policy.

There are other possible narratives, and hence, other possible directions for the implementation of policy. The aim to *increase* the total number of people studying languages (the ALLP target is for the proportion of Year 12 students studying a LOTE to increase to 25% by the year 2000 (*DEET* 1991:II, 62)) shows that it is inappropriate to calculate balance as an equal division of the cake. The cake is becoming larger, and the share of French may decrease

as a proportion, while still maintaining stable numbers of students and a strong supply of teachers. It is this kind of scenario that explains another role that French has in the overall picture. In its recommendations concerning the expansion of Spanish in Australian Schools, the Senate Committee (1992) warns against the possibility that this expansion might work to the detriment of other languages. "It should be a net addition to current efforts" (16). The Committee explicitly invokes French as a benchmark to state the appropriate objectives of Spanish language programs. Recommendation thirty-six reads:

> The Committee recommends that in the implementation of the White Paper *Australia's Language: The Australian Language and Literacy Policy*, resources be allocated in such a way as to ensure that by the year 2000 the provision of Spanish language training in Australia brings the Spanish language more nearly towards that attained by the French language, both in numbers of students and level of proficiency. (1992:15-16)

This is in our opinion a proper outcome for a policy based on the aspiration to "balance". The long tradition of French is not only a monopoly that needed to be broken. It is also a rich source of experience in language teaching in Australia. In place of the debilitating competition to which Clyne draws our attention (1991:17) we would hope that the strength of French is not undermined, but rather used productively in the "wider teaching" of languages.

1.3 "French" in Australia

As we have suggested in our opening remarks, France and things French are associated in the Australian mind with some rather tired stereotypes. They are also associated with some significant moments of Australian history and, as elsewhere in the Western world, with major cultural movements. Corny though the stereotypes may be, they become a serious issue as soon as we consider their possible influence on, for example, an educational administrator's evaluation of the claims of French as against those of one of the commonly accepted "business languages".

> ◆ There is a growing number of large French international corporations investing in Australia in areas as diverse as engineering, mining and agriculture, as well as banking. They behave with what the Americans would call a "low profile" and they themselves would call "discretion", frequently *translating* their corporate names (eg. Air Liquid = Liquid Air) as a response to what they correctly perceive to be the insular and monolingual habits of Australian business. The Australian public is largely unaware of their existence and their identity as French companies, and continues not to associate French with activities such as theirs. One need only point to the role of Tomago in the Hunter region. If educational administrators in Newcastle were more often made aware of Tomago's strong French connection, through Péchiney, they might come to recognize the "geopolitical significance" of French. ◆

In this section, we will survey the variety of places occupied by "French" in Australian culture, considering under the term "culture" the range of discourse from advertising to philosophy.

1.3.1 The Market

The French language and things French can be talked about as marketable products within the Australian economy. In 1991, for example, a professional survey of market interest in France, French language and culture identified the following as being of particular interest to Australians: French wines, fashion, cosmetics, architecture, language, cinema, style, perfumes, cuisine, literature, art, furniture, design, culture, music, theatre. The list is long, but relatively coherent, bringing together as it does elegant lifestyles and prestigious high culture. A recurrent theme in the market survey is that more than 60% of city-dwelling Australian adults are interested in visiting France. The most interested group tends to include better educated people, professional and white-collar workers, and those with higher incomes. The desire to travel to France is not just a kind of vague nostalgia: according to the French consulate-general, about 1% of Australians apply for tourist visas to visit France each year.

> ◆ *Modern Times*, March 1992: 44, has a full page article on walking trips in the Dordogne (France). The Australian travel agency concerned offers walks of this kind in Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Germany and Belgium, but the majority of tours are to France. The range of countries here, together with the French emphasis, presumably reflects consumer demand, just as the fact of the agency's advertising in *Modern Times* reflects its marketing orientation towards well-educated and professional Australians. ◆

When France and things French are treated as marketable products, one can expect that they will have a definite "image" in the mind of the public, and there are strong signs that this is in fact the case. A second market survey, conducted recently by a French car manufacturer, while not available for detailed public discussion, reveals that Australians have a favourable attitude towards French products, on condition that they are associated with values already thought of as typically French. If French cars are presented only in terms of their technical qualities, or their reliability, they are unlikely to compete successfully with their German or Japanese rivals. If, however, they are associated with images of pleasure and elegance through advertising, there is every likelihood that they will be favourably received. Indeed, in response to a particular test, 90% of the Australians surveyed saw Australia as somehow closer to France, the bond being one of affection or cultural sympathy, rather than the more distant "respect" accorded to Germany and Japan.

Such surveys tell one nothing of any inherent qualities of French, German or Japanese people, but they do indicate patterns of thinking in Australian society. They point to the existence in Australian cultural exchange of a well-established set of stereotypes about French and France, binding the language almost exclusively to that country, and often associating it quite narrowly with a tourist's view of Paris. In this market, French products can

be readily sold, as long as their qualities are consonant with what is already known about the typically French. Everything from mineral water to cars can be marketed in this way, as long as the products are associated with pleasure and elegance.

◆ **French in Australian Advertising**

During late 1991 and 1992, Australian commercial television channels have shown at least twenty-four television commercials which make use of, or reference to, French. Of these, no more than one third have actually been for products originating in France. The others have been for Australian products, although some of these are being marketed as if they were French. Three quarters of the products being marketed were food and drink, but the rest ranged from beauty products to cars. Most of the commercials encountered during this period of observation used language that evoked spoken French. In five of them, English was spoken with a strong French accent, but all of the other nineteen contained at least some spoken French. In one, the spoken French text was accompanied by an English voice-over. In six others, the French text was accompanied by English subtitles. Remarkably, eight of the commercials had no subtitles at all. Their makers were happy to suppose that the audience could understand the general message without the help of translation. The nature of the message, it must be said, was not such as to require genuine understanding of the spoken language, but it is hard to imagine, nonetheless, how anything comparable could have been done in Australia with another LOTE. Only French, it would appear, can be taken as known in this way, as the most familiar of foreign languages.

Not all the French used was represented as produced by foreigners. There were a few examples of Australians speaking French. In one case, there was merely the insistent repetition of the word *le*, spoken with a broad Australian accent, and used in total disregard of the most elementary rules of French grammar. Even this commercial, however, depended for its humour on the fact that rules at least half-known to the audience were being shamelessly violated by a working-class man speaking broad Australian. This is French of the "parley-voo" variety, updated. In just one case, there was an Australian shown speaking French well enough to deceive some non-French speakers into thinking he was French, although a second example of this was reported without being recorded for our study. From the point of view of attitudes to LOTEs, such positive representations of language achievement by native English speakers, while atypical, can be thought of as encouragingly progressive, in that they do not simply leave a vast gap between humorously inadequate Australian language performance, on the one hand, and familiarly exotic French brilliance, on the other. ◆

1.3.2 Francophilia and Francophobia

There is strong evidence that many Australians attach positive value to French and Frenchness, or at least to the stereotypes that surround and even define them. Yet it would be misleading, in a report such as this, not to draw attention to the continuing strength of anti-French views in Australia. Such views can be seen, in a relatively benign form, in the success enjoyed locally by the British television series "Allo! Allo!", which presents a caricature of the French during the times of the German occupation. The stereotypes presented there are doubtless less damagingly negative than those presented elsewhere of the Germans or the Japanese during wartime, but they tend nonetheless to display (British-based) stereotypes of the French as cowardly and amoral. "Allo! Allo!", in its implicit messages about France, is difficult to reconcile with advertising for Renault, Nescafé, or Fabergé which might be shown during commercial breaks in the same program. In practice, these ironic messages must serve to limit the range of qualities for which "the French" can be admired.

More tellingly negative is the critique of France which comes from those sections of the Australian public that sympathise with left wing views, especially of the environmentalist kind. While "Allo! Allo!" enacts its rather clichéd British representations of the French, home-grown Australian programs sometimes develop more pointed satire of their own. The ABC's "The Big Gig", for example, has tended to follow every reference to France by flashing on the screen the word "bastards", as a kind of global automatic response to nuclear testing at Mururoa, and the sinking of the "Rainbow Warrior". The relatively young audience attracted to such programs may be learning to make quasi-automatic associations between France and imperialist values (often referred to as arrogance). In that way France can appear to some young Australians as a natural enemy, and that is something that should be of great concern to those involved professionally with French in Australia. As with political events that have occurred in recent years in China and Indonesia, a sense of moral and political conflict can only undermine the motivation of socially aware students as they come to learn a language.

Australian francophobia is brought to a head in a recent article by Gerard Henderson (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 Feb. 1992), calling on Australians to "discriminate against the French". Far from being a conventional left wing attack on France, this presents itself as an economic rationalist's attack, describing France as "the leading opponent of international free trade", and "the cause of many of Australia's economic discontents". Rather than pursuing this politico-economic criticism in detail, the article goes on to provide a long list of complaints about the French. They have "sold out" in the fight against terrorism; they are responsible for the EC's Common Agricultural Policy; they were defeatists and collaborators in two world wars; they sheltered and welcomed Edward VIII when he abdicated the throne; through nuclear testing and the "Rainbow Warrior" affair, they effectively boosted the stocks of radical ecologists in Australia. So disparate is this list, and so indiscriminate its call for discrimination, that the article comes close to a form of black humour. Yet there is no reason to take it as anything other than an expression of genuine francophobia, perhaps accompanied by irritation that France and French should continue

to have so much prestige in the eyes of many Australians. Henderson calls for an ABC journalist to be discouraged in future from talking enthusiastically about Paris restaurants, and no doubt would like to discourage all of the 60% of Australians who are enthusiastic about the idea of travelling to France. Whatever the eccentricities of Henderson's article, and whatever its propensity to self-caricature, this piece of writing is symptomatic of a certain polarisation, if not an actual conflict, surrounding France and the French. They are privileged objects of attention, often seen positively, but sometimes viewed quite negatively. The terms "sinophilia" or "hispanophobia" can hardly be said to have the same currency as "francophilia" or "francophobia". Such strong community attitudes, in their very ambivalence, can be found to influence educational practices, and to have an impact on discussions of LOTE policy.

1.3.3 Responding to Demand - The Education Market

Where the image of the language is laden with stereotypes, it is not easy for teachers to respond constructively. Teachers of French to beginners, especially those teaching adults, regularly report that their students are motivated in the study of French by their positive, yet stereotypical views of the target culture. One French-born university teacher has in his office a considerable number and variety of frogs, all given to him at various times by students. "Do these frogs not serve as a distraction?" one might ask, and are not all Australian French classrooms threatened with invasion by the frog stereotype? The teacher in question does not feel threatened. He says resignedly that it is best to keep the stereotypes going for a while as a "public relations exercise". Only then can one begin to change some of the students' ideas, he says, comparing himself to a parent teaching children about Father Christmas. Teachers presenting courses to the general public are likely to be even more conscious of the market pressure on classes requiring them to rehearse and recycle stereotypes. One of the larger Alliance Française centres has found, in a professionally-conducted survey, that its students expect to find at the Alliance all the things they already "know" to be typically French. Students want to have cooking classes, wine appreciation, and cultural events mixed in with their French lessons. The concern, for teachers who wish to question and disturb Australian stereotypes, is that they may find it difficult to do so without threatening their students' desire to learn. It may be almost impossible, in practice, to lead students from an interest in French cuisine to a discussion of the problems of second-generation immigrants in France, or an awareness of France's economic influence in post-colonial Africa.

It must be added, however, that French courses are widely valued in Australia for other reasons than the "commercial" ones just mentioned. As the principal of a high-profile multilingual school pointed out, it is easier to convince educated, upper-middle-class parents to enrol their children in a bilingual French-English program, than to attract them to one involving German, Italian, or Spanish, "because there is still a feeling of the leading French cultural role". This view of French, described by the principal as "ingrained", is presumably based on an awareness that French is recognized as important in many countries and international institutions outside Australia. Furthermore, parents who are in search of elite programs for

their children are attracted to French because they associate it with a certain academic tradition, and thus with notions of rigour. In this way, French can become a focus for conservative values. *DEET 1991* is doubtless referring primarily to French (and perhaps Latin) when it says: "Some ambitious parents may want their children to study particular languages which enjoyed a high status in the past as subjects suitable for the academically-minded child" (1991:II, 73).

There are of course real contradictions here. French is associated with pleasure, but also with severity. It is something to do for fun, but is also associated with a rigorous academic tradition. It is seen as thoroughly modern and stylish, and yet is associated with the oldest practices of the foreign language classroom. Such contradictions surround French, as an object of policy-making, with all kinds of tensions. When *DEET 1991* refers to "the poor status of languages in the eyes of many parents and children, often arising from the parents' own negative language learning experiences" (1991:II, 73), it also appears to be referring to French, more than to any other language. Among the Australian population, established attitudes to language learning, both positive and negative, tend to focus on French. The task, for policy makers and teachers, is to respond to this range of views and interests without simply accepting or confirming the unthinking assumptions in circulation.

1.3.4 French Cultural Influence in Australia

Another way of asking the question of the place of "French" in Australia is to ask what importance French - the language, things French - have within Australia's cultural identity. This is a shifting, continually modifying construct, and in some ways, the question of French helps to map some of the directions of shift. It also traces an interesting ambiguity. Insofar as the cultural identity of colonial Australia was grafted on to, or derived from, a largely British culture, it can be said that French had the same place in Australia as it had in 19th Century Britain. But Australia was also a colony, and this identity with Britain was by no means an unambiguous good, being contested not only by the large Irish population, but also by the emerging intellectual groups of the major cities. France was the sibling rival with Britain not only for colonial power, but also for cultural prestige, in Europe and in European derived cultures, throughout the 19th century, and this may account for the ambiguous, but always significant, place of French and its culture in the development of Australian cultural traditions. We point to three facts to demonstrate this ambiguity:

- French was the language of the Revolution, contemporary with Australia's beginnings, and it is known that utopian progressive thought in Australia used this fact as a form of resistance to the hierarchies and inequalities of colonial rule. French in this case had the prestige that it had in the British cultural map, as well as the prestige that derived from its opposition by conservative British responses to the Revolution. The progressive and the avant-garde writers of Britain as elsewhere in Europe, believed in the ideals of the Revolution, the emerging intellectual classes of 19th century Australia identified in France, and in the French books they were reading, those ideas and projects for a future that could be grafted on to a new country,

unspoiled by the conservative past of the colonising power. The fact that this was somewhat naïve, given, precisely, the colonial foundation of that same new country, is beside the point. French, for this reason, is part of a long-standing intellectual and political tradition in Australia. This tradition persists, with the prestige of French philosophical and political writing asserted against British traditions of empiricism.

- In what we might loosely term "establishment" circles in colonial Australia - largely the administration, the military, and the law, French was a more ambivalent object: at once associated with elegance and chic, it was yet to be distrusted in matters to do with the daily business of running the country. This tradition also persists, and is complementary to the above point.

- French is also, necessarily, and in the same way as other European cultures, including the British, a symbol of the "old world", to be distrusted in the "new" precisely because it is seen to perpetuate forms of cultural domination that Western derived cultures such as Canada, the United States, as well as Australia, attempt both to imitate, and to throw off.

Big historical events with resonance well beyond the boundaries of the countries in which they occur are bound to inflect the representation of those countries in other cultures. We have mentioned the fact that the establishment of white Australia coincided with the beginnings of the French Revolution. The importance of this coincidence cannot be overestimated in any attempt to understand the place of France and things French in the social and cultural aspirations of a country like Australia, whose history is precisely a history of forging a national cultural identity that would both derive from, and differentiate itself from, the dominant cultures of Europe. Another historical event that had an immediate and significant impact on popular understandings of the relation between Australia and France was the Great War. "There is a corner of a foreign land that is forever Australia" is importantly true for those areas of northern France where thousands of Australian soldiers fought "the Hun" and where whole villages have renamed their streets after the names of Australian towns. A history such is this is not merely popular and sentimental: it drives deep into the consciousness of the generation of our grandparents a sense of the profound solidarity of French interests with Australian. Clearly, of course, the official form of this solidarity involved the identity of Australian interests with Britain. But to dismiss it as no longer relevant to modern Australia, or to draw from it the lesson that Australia must slough off its links with France at the same time as its dependence on the British identity, is to miss the point. The generation of Australian men who fought to defend the inhabitants of Northern France knew them as people: they protected and were protected by them, they shared food and shelter with them, they knew at first hand the destruction of whole communities and of their towns and their agricultural livelihood; and when they came home, they came with their stories. This is surely one of the ways in which France and things French came to occupy a significant place in the Australian collective memory, in that part of the emerging Australian cultural identity that charts the changing relations of this country with others. French was not an elitist irrelevance for these people or for the generation they brought up and educated.

In more recent times, the sense of solidarity with France has been sorely tested by events in the closer vicinity of Australia: Australia successfully prosecuted an action against France in the International Court of Justice, concerning above ground nuclear testing at Mururoa; we had our say in the Rainbow Warrior affair, as well as in the issue of the political status of New Caledonia. These events, together with the growing sense of regional solidarity, and the need to separate Australian interests from the colonial past, have reduced the prestige of France and French culture in the world of Australia. Yet from them, we expect, will emerge a new place for French, identified less with Metropolitan France than with its present and ex Pacific dependencies. French is an important *lingua franca* in the Pacific basin: there are many reasons for Australians to speak it.

It is not easy to talk analytically about "cultural influence" in the broader and stronger sense. French influence is clearly more than the recognition of stereotypes, and more than the formulation of considered judgments about the political and diplomatic actions of another nation. In particular, for the everyday culture of Australians, what matters most are the frequency of reference to French culture(s), and the productiveness of such references - in a word, the uses to which they are put. This point is well made in a recent collection of Australian essays edited by Kevin D. S. Murray, *The Judgement of Paris: French Theory in a Local Context* (1992), in which literary critics, historians, art critics, philosophers, mathematicians and sociologists speak of French theory. They do not do so merely to mark the importance of such thought, or to enhance their own prestige by association with it, but to perform what Murray calls "demonstrations of relevance" (ix) in which the theory is applied and reconceived in local contexts. None of those contributing to the volume are professional linguists or French specialists from tertiary language departments. They are merely responding (and contributing) to the impact of French-based thinking on their various disciplines.

From grandiose exhibitions of Toulouse Lautrec or Matisse to the production by young artists of avant-garde oppositional material based on the work of Baudrillard, Franco-Australian connections serve as channels of ongoing cultural influence. For many of those who are genuinely informed about cultural developments, the stereotypical images associated with standard francophilia are thoroughly inappropriate. French, they suggest, does not deserve to be associated with cultural conservatism, but with innovation of all kinds. What is more, they sometimes point out, many of Australia's most active intellectuals respond with alacrity to new developments in France. This may be seen to have started with the taking up, by poets such as Christopher Brennan, of Symbolism. Beckett's *En attendant Godot* (*Waiting for Godot*) did not need to pass through London or New York in order to be noticed in Australia. It was produced at the Independent Theatre in North Sydney within months of its first appearance in Paris (*Le Courrier Australien*, April 1992:75).

It might be said that all this is merely the high-cultural version of Australia's balance of payments problem, in that it makes Australian cultural innovation dependent on the latest book, or the most recent intellectual fashion, from Paris. Murray himself entertains that possibility by suggesting that the ideas of Derrida, Foucault or Baudrillard may

sometimes function like imported consumer goods: "Could it be possible that an openness to the complex ideas of Derrida is in part due to a sentimental residue for things Parisian - the same partiality which may exist for other cultural items, such as Chanel N^{o} 5?" (1992: xxi). The answer given in practice to this question is, however, much more complex and more subtle (cf. Morris 1981, in Botsman et al.). Ideas imported from, or attributed to France are used locally to carry out certain tasks. Their "relevance" is not just determined by habit, or conformism: it is regularly demonstrated in new forms of cultural practice. Rather than appreciating French as the privileged medium of gastronomic tourism, some young Australians have felt compelled to develop some form of linguistic sensitivity for the sake of their intellectual work. Even when certain television commercials in Australia can pretend not to recognize any grammatical difference between *le* and *la*, those who take Derrida seriously are obliged to distinguish carefully between such words (and notions) as *différence* and *différance*. As O'Farrell remarks ironically, "in extreme examples, [Australian theoreticians] may be forced to learn French" (Murray (ed.) 1992:160).

While it is possible to argue that the importing of ideas from France is another form of post-colonial dependence, it could also be said that reference to France is used by Australian intellectuals in order to inflect the nation's cultural history. In a country considered by many to be dominated by a puritan British tradition - although that is, of course, another stereotype - French and Frenchness, with their associations of pleasure and intellectual freedom, can act as a familiar antithesis, or antidote, serving to liberate Australia from the oppression of a narrow colonial past. Rose, when talking of Josephine Baker's life in Paris, asks a rhetorical question about America: "Who wouldn't prefer to puritan America the Paris of La Baker...?" ("The Fabulous Josephine Baker", *Australian Society*, Nov. 1990: 41). To Australian ears this might just as easily have been a question about the puritan Australia of the same era. Burke talks in much the same terms about the manner in which Australian artist Rupert Bunny "fell in love with France":

> How did Bunny, the boy from St. Kilda, manage it? Australia can be a cruel place for men, even those who have an entree to liberating bohemian circles. Wisely, Bunny left as soon as he could and stayed away as long as he could. ("Artist at Ease and on the Edge", *Australian Society*, Sept. 1991: 34-35.)

Baggioni's more flamboyantly psychoanalytical version of this same analysis suggests that the "femininity" associated by tradition with France acts as compensation for the convict, larrikin, anti-intellectual traditions of Australian virility (Baggioni 1987: 50-51.)

It is not simply that, as Murray observes, "Paris serves as a kind of utopia for alienated intellectuals" (1992: xx). It is not just that the lure of Paris can lead to the indefinite expatriation of artists and writers - washed down the brain drain, so to speak, by French cultural influence, and Australia's need of it. There is also the fact that reference to France and Frenchness can be, and is used by Australians as, a corrective to established cultural habits no longer regarded with the same respect. Insofar as the British connection is viewed as an inhibiting post-colonial residue, France, perhaps more than other European countries, seems to provide alternative cultural models of a

kind both refreshingly new and comfortingly familiar. Whatever transformation may be necessary if Australia is eventually to see itself as belonging culturally in the Asia-Pacific region, there are already clear signs that reference to France has served for many years, at least for certain groups, as a model for change and a call to greater cultural freedom. In that sense, the cultural conservatives who wish to visit the *vignobles*[2] of the Bordeaux region are not entirely at odds with those young literary critics who delight in the latest work by Derrida. Both are contributing to, and benefiting from, a French-Australian cultural connection.

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1 Similarly, in a report on LOTE in the Metropolitan East Region, it is stated that : "The targeted balance between European and Asian languages as [sic] been reached." However, the "balance" of 56% Asian and 44% European is composed by rather inequal enrolments in the six languages listed: Japanese 43%, Chinese 13%, Indonesian 0%, versus German 28%, French 12%; Italian 4%.

2 Yet another term we do not need to translate.

2.0 French in Education

2.1 History

One of the first French teachers in Australia, perhaps the very first, was an aristocratic refugee from France: Gabriel Louis Marie Huon de Kerilliau was a member of the Bourbon family who served in the New South Wales corps until 1807, before being employed by Governor Macarthur as the tutor of his children (Stuer 1982:44). It is not recorded how Huon de Kerilliau organized the curriculum of French studies, nor what classroom methods he used. Was he concerned to teach only the history of great events in France, up to and including the Revolution? Did he spend time with his pupils discussing, and even studying that great array of novels by women that were so widely read in eighteenth-century France? Perhaps he was an admirer of Rousseau, seeking refuge in the antipodes from the stale artificiality of Paris, and hoping to evoke richly human responses from his students. Most likely, he concentrated on teaching the language and practices of French etiquette. If that was indeed the case, he could be thought of as a pragmatically minded teacher, less interested in passing on canonical knowledge to his pupils, than in the communicative uses of the language they were acquiring.

It is not certain whether this snippet of professional folklore can be taken to represent the beginning of a tradition of French in the schools, although it might well represent the beginning of a certain *image* of French that French teachers of the 1990s might prefer to do without. French teaching has had some presence in the schools since the mid 19th century, and it is certain that, right from the start, the viability of French as a curriculum area was tied, as it continues to be, to the effectiveness of its teaching practices. In this section, we will consider curriculum and teaching methods together, not because they are inseparable in principle, but because their histories are closely intertwined. At key points in the history of French in formal education in Australia, leading professionals understood that certain decisions about curriculum entailed certain methods, and vice versa. This point is of importance beyond the specific history of French, since - because of the established position of French in the curriculum for the greater part of the century - innovative practices in "modern language" teaching have largely been led by French teachers. It is, of course, no longer simply the case that modern language teaching is virtually coextensive with French teaching (Hick 1964:iii), but it is taken as self-evident by many professionals that French continues to be the area of most rapid change. In the HSC examination in New South Wales, for example, the introduction of a major assessment component in aural-oral language (45%), together with new options in film, song, and business language, are all French initiatives, followed to varying degrees in other languages. Clearly, the history of French deserves to be studied within the long tradition it has helped establish in Australian LOTE teaching, and for the matrix of innovation that provides.

Language teachers today are well used, as we noted in our introduction, to hearing reproachful comment from those who once studied French (or German) at school. "I did it for years", they say, "and cannot speak a word", forgetting when they say this that the courses they followed at school were

not necessarily aimed at teaching them how to speak. Very few modern LOTE teachers show an inclination to defend what was done in the past: they are more inclined to attack it in the name of the progress that has since occurred. Leading professionals such as Ingram (Senate Report on relations with Latin America, 25 Oct. 1991: 1176) and Quinn (Senate 1984. *A National Language Policy*, [Evidence]: 403) prefer to adopt what might be called a forward defence policy. Their key point, in reply to the standard criticism, is that modern languages are no longer taught in the way they once were. This is established, correctly enough, as a matter of fact, by *DEET 1991*, when it speaks of "improved teaching methodologies" in the field (1991:II, 3).

We should beware of the dangers of telling the story too simply. Gone are the days, admittedly, when Latin teaching was the model, and learning conjugations one of the essential classroom activities. But it does not follow that those were the Dark Ages of language teaching, even if students were sometimes led to imagine, as one commentator recently put it, that French people walked up and down the Champs Elysées conjugating verbs in perfect rhythm. The series of points we wish to make here can be seen as a corrective to an overly simple narrative view of history. Some of the curriculum and methodology issues in language teaching have been issues for decades, perhaps for a century, so that any history which begins in the 1970s is likely to be misleading. The short history that follows is an attempt to understand how some familiar modern problems were raised, and sometimes subsequently forgotten, by our (historical) colleagues working in the field of French.

We will focus our attention on the history of French in New South Wales and Victoria, because the staffing of the early university departments in the rest of the country was largely drawn from the graduates of the oldest two universities, Sydney and Melbourne. The universities provided graduates for the staffing of the teacher training institutions, and of the schools, and while there are interesting local variations in each of the other states, the history of French in these two states is both sufficiently significant in the broader picture, and sufficiently emblematic, to provide the parameters of a sketch of the whole, and to indicate the kinds of pressures that marked it throughout the country.

The history of the integration of French instruction into the curricula of formal education in Australia is barely a century old, although sporadic and interesting attempts to introduce it go back to the 1850s (see Wykes 1958; Hick 1964; Kerr 1971). Modern languages took their place in the work of universities and schools in the climate of a particular debate which is of some interest to us in contemporary Australia. Wykes puts it this way: "A choice had to be made. Should the Australian schools select the aristocratic, liberal type of education, which, by means of Latin and Greek, trained the intellect of the future leaders of the state at the public and older endowed grammar schools, or the utilitarian type, which, in academies and private schools, by means of Classics and useful subjects, prepared the sons of the middle-classes for their vocations?" (Wykes 1958:1). Modern languages were classed as useful in Britain, and this classification was not questioned when the education debates of the nineteenth century were transported to Australia (1958:1). The debate was resolved by the 1890s, in favour of the utilitarian view. The "commercial value" of French was fostered by a group

of Sydney businessmen in 1889, and its teaching at the Sydney Grammar School was supported financially by them (Wykes 1958:31); business French classes flourished during the 1890s (1958:31). This utilitarian value was even more systematically asserted in Melbourne, where the University was "founded in an altogether different atmosphere from the University of Sydney" (1958:94). The University of Melbourne was founded as a vocational university, training "scientists, engineers and doctors" (1958:94), thinking of itself as serving the "practical" needs of the modern middle classes; in keeping with this spirit, coordination with the school system was paramount. French and German "were considered especially valuable 'as a means of communicating with the large foreign population found in Victoria.' If these languages were to be spoken fluently, they must be begun at school". Furthermore, these same languages were considered as "instrument[s] of obtaining useful knowledge". (1958:96). In keeping with this way of valuing the study of modern languages, there was considerable support in Melbourne, at the University and more broadly in the community, for a wide range of languages to be included in the curriculum; as early as 1913, Italian, Spanish, Chinese and Japanese are mentioned as "subjects which should be taught in any great and progressive university" (1958:125), and in 1916, the minutes of the University Council record the opinion that "a place should also be found for other European as well as Asian and Oceanic languages because of their usefulness in commerce" (1958:125). Wykes notes that Hebrew and Japanese were included in the list of examinable subjects for matriculation in 1931 (1958:167), but that none of these moves made a discernible difference to the importance of French which, owing to the decline of German consequent upon the two World Wars, retained its prominence in the school and university curriculum until well into the 1950s.

Despite the focus on the utility of languages for a modern life defined by commerce, industry and the professions, the traditional modes of study of the classical languages dominated the imagination of language instruction in the early days. French teaching designed its curricula by adapting the models available from Latin teaching. The focus on the written language, and on a definition of culture that privileged the great books of literature, provided the basis for an unfortunately widespread experience of French learning among Australians: taught as a dead language, it effectively remained one. LOTE professionals of the 1990s have learnt how to respond to this observation, as we noted, by telling the triumphal story: in the old days it was like this, they say, but now we teach French interactively (or "with the communicative method") so those experiences will not be repeated for the current generation. To a large extent, this is true: the shift in focus, from the written to the spoken word, already largely in place in the language classroom by the mid-1970s, has been followed over the last 20 years by a boom in research into language learning, and the development of creative methods of teaching, led largely by the French teaching specialists. Why this is so is a question we shall return to. The result is that many students are learning French in the classroom that they can use, so to speak, in the streets, that is effective in the interactions they have with native French speakers.

What is not true, in the simple narrative of the improvement in teaching methods, is the assumption that in the old days, it was all uniformly bad, or that enlightenment came only with the latest advance in methodology. The history of French teaching in Australia is a history of reform - frequently thwarted - and innovation - frequently promising much more than it could

give. Early in the 20th century, "a revolution was taking place in the teaching of Modern Languages in Europe, and for the first time in history extensive literature on the method of teaching them was being published" (Wykes 1958:35). Curiously, although the movement is located on the Continent, an Australian - Mr. Tilly, of the Tilly Institute in Berlin - is justly celebrated in the memoirs of some prominent modern language professionals in Australia (cf. Chisholm 1958:71-83) for introducing them to the new "direct method" (Wykes 1958:36 and throughout). As early as 1911, following the high-school reforms in New South Wales of that year, senior teachers and lecturers at the Sydney Teachers' College were introducing this method of instruction (Hick 1964:113-156). The "direct method" distinguished itself from the "indirect method" by its focus on the spoken language and the introduction of "free composition" into the standard learning and examination exercises. By "spoken French" was meant primarily recognisable pronunciation, and in this the method not only achieved considerable success but also a lasting influence on later teaching, following its own demise. It also included instructions given in French, and two-line dialogues on set topics. The free composition displaced the sight translation, and an unprescribed commentary on a text replaced a prescribed text for the *texte expliqué* exercise.

Hick tells a fascinating story about the demise of the direct method in New South Wales in the early 1920s: it lasted, as the audio-lingual method was to do, for about 10 years. With inadequate teacher training, few teachers having contact with native French speakers, let alone in-country experience, and a conflict between the the universities and the schools concerning the aims and objectives of secondary education, "the major reasons ... lay in the examination system and in the inability of the mass of the teachers to meet the demands of the method" (1964:173). Beyond this, however, lay another factor that was to clinch the official overthrow of the method once its success was in doubt; this was the problem of the overall objectives of educational policy. The key figures were the inspectors, charged with its implementation. It was they who had an overview of the whole curriculum and of the place of "foreign languages" (generally French and Latin, with some German) in it. They began to express doubt as to the wisdom of a curriculum that imposed language study on all pupils who attended high schools. One of the objections was that the language requirement was not imposed on the technical schools, resulting in the "two-caste system" (quoted in Hick 1964:176); another was that "it is wasteful to pursue [language] study for a year or two and then drop it as such large numbers do" (1964:175); and a third, that "9/10" of the pupils gained little or no benefit from it (1964:175) Hick sums up:

> Oddly, one of the major weaknesses in modern language teaching as it existed in the period after the high-school reforms of 1911 lay in its very strength. It had become an article of faith that the learning of a modern language was of supreme educational value, yet the writer of the article quoted above was able to affirm, and no doubt with some truth, that not one tenth of the pupils gained any benefit from the study. Because of this value that language study was deemed to have, practically every high-school pupil studied a foreign tongue, irrespective of his ability and inclination, and the prime consideration on the part of the teacher and pupil was maximum success in the public

> examinations, with scant regard to the real purpose of language study. In consequence, whilst languages as such were paramount in the curriculum, true language study became a neglected art. [...] the slavish adherence to the syllabus ... had resulted in rote learning of grammatical intricacies ... (1964:177-8).

The real villain in the piece, in Hick's narrative, is the dominance of the examination system. Faced with the conflict of the demands made by the matriculation examination, on the one hand, and the genuine attempts to create a practice of language instruction that included freedom of interaction and self-generated learning processes (Hick 1964:138 and throughout), the inspectors, and through them the policy makers, made their choice:

> It would appear that the highly selective nature of the high schools had resulted in too intensive and academic teaching methods, and that these had in turn, by their nature, repelled many of the students, causing a premature and widespread exodus from the schools. Faced with problems of such magnitude, it is not surprising that the more specialised problems of methodology in modern language teaching became somewhat neglected and that attention was given to the task of creating a surer path through the high schools into the university and the professions. (1964:179-180)

The fate of the direct method was different in Victoria, where it received new impetus in the early 1930s, just after its official endorsement had been lost in New South Wales. Wykes refers to the "peaceful" evolution of the method in Victoria, where it had not been subject to political interference (1958:165, 172). But it is clear that the success or failure of the method lay in its implementation. In New South Wales, it had always been policy to set alternative examination papers, which pupils could choose depending on the way they had been taught (Hick 1964:148 and throughout): never was the direct method a totally dominant orthodoxy. Partly because of this fact, no doubt, it had never been policy to examine oral work in New South Wales, whereas in Victoria, from 1903 onwards, oral examinations were arranged in every examination centre where there were at least ten candidates (Wykes 1958:137). In this, the examination system supported the methodological innovations of the classroom, whereas in New South Wales, the opposite was the case.

It is difficult to resist the temptation of applying the lessons of history to the present day. As Wykes records, the early history of modern language teaching was subject to ups and downs, responding to economic and political pressures in ways which are quite familiar. In the 1890s, for instance, "French, the 'useful' subject, was made optional in a small group of schools precisely because it was not useful for all but a minority of New South Wales children. It must be remembered that this was the decade of the depression, when the problem of finding a job for their children must have been uppermost in parents' minds" (1958:33). But French continued to flourish, becoming by 1902 the most popular subject at the Senior Public Examination (1958:33). The rationale for the teaching of foreign languages in so widespread a manner was very similar to the ones that inform contemporary LOTE policies, although the presence in late 20th century Australia of a vast multilingual population makes the conditions under which those policies might take effect very different. Nevertheless, insofar as LOTE

policies are largely directed at the monolingual population, the benefits to be derived from learning a LOTE are framed in ways entirely recognisable in this passage, dated 1910:

> In the world of commerce and industry, a practical knowledge of modern languages is becoming more and more necessary, and it is now universally allowed that such a knowledge is indispensable if we are to compete at all successfully with our European rivals ... The search for such means [of more effective modern language teaching] and their effective application in school instruction, constitute the present reform movement in modern language teaching ... The other main cause of the present-day prominence of modern languages and modern language teaching is the wide recognition of their value as a means of supplying the mental training and literary culture so distinctive of a liberal education. (quoted in Hick 1964:119)

The demise of the direct method in New South Wales was a tragedy, leaving the English-speaking population monolingual until the present day. There are three lessons to be learnt from it: (i) the dangers attendant upon any confusion between curriculum and methodology, on the one hand, and tertiary entrance requirements on the other; (ii) the dangers attendant upon allowing the LOTE policy to conflict with other areas of the curriculum; and (iii) the absolute necessity of highly trained specialist LOTE teachers available across the whole spectrum of primary and secondary schooling.

The history of French in the universities was separate, although connected with that of the schools in important ways, as evidenced by the influence of the examination system on the secondary curriculum. Again, the relation between the two sides of the "matriculation divide" was different in each state. Whereas coordination between the schools and the university was relatively systematic in Victoria, in New South Wales, as Hick points out, the secondary curriculum came a poor third (1964:11-52). It was squeezed between the primary system and the universities. Elementary French was taught from 1872 onwards in a growing number of primary schools: the end of primary French teaching in New South Wales can be dated exactly, to 1911, when the high school reforms established an administrative distinction between primary and secondary schooling, and dictated *inter alia* that languages were the province of the latter. In the universities, the introduction of Modern Languages (i.e. French and German) was extremely hesitant: language instruction was not initially a formal part of the degree structure, the lecturers were low-paid and on contracts that could be readily terminated, and enrolments were poor. It was not until 1884 at Melbourne University, and 1882 at Sydney University (the other State Universities following these dates) that modern languages became part of the standard offerings of the Faculty (See Barko 1991; Kerr 1971). In the case of Sydney, the hesitation can be attributed to three sources:

- Sydney University self-consciously modelled itself on the English Universities, specifically Oxford, and in the matter of modern languages as in so many others followed their lead. There simply was no tradition in which modern languages had an acknowledged place, and there was, accordingly, no tradition for the teaching. When Mungo MacCallum took up the Chair of Modern Literature in 1887, he made it clear to the Senate of the University of Sydney that this

traditional base was too narrow: a modern arts degree, he argued, could borrow from traditions further afield, and he named those of the German and French universities, as well as "some American ones" (Kerr 1972: chs 2,3).

- The foundation of the Chair of Modern Literature shows, however, that the issue was not "languages" so much as the "modern". The professing of modern English literature was as much an innovation as the professing of French or German. MacCallum's brief was a departure from the Oxford tradition in that it effectively contested the centrality of classics in the Arts degree. In this it should be compared to the introduction of the modern tripos at Cambridge, but MacCallum's work did not self-consciously follow this example, looking instead, as we have said, to continental traditions.

- Because there was no place in the formal university curriculum for modern languages, they had only an uncertain place in the schools, either those preparing students for the University, or those preparing students for other work (this distinction was formalised in the NSW examination system, which distinguished the Matriculation Examination from the Senior Public Examination). Given this, students who did enrol in French or German classes at the University were taught the language at an elementary level, whether or not they had acquired some linguistic competence from private sources or informal instruction. An objection to language instruction in the university was heard in the 1880s that is entirely familiar to language teachers who worked in Australian universities a century later: elementary language instruction was not deemed appropriate to university studies (Wykes 1958:23).

The situation sketched above explains some of the features of the university courses in French when they were in fact introduced, and it goes some way towards explaining their reliance on the model provided by the classics - the notion that language competence was defined by the ability to construe canonical texts, and to write acceptable "compositions" on the models of those texts. The idea that the language was a "target" language which the student might want to acquire in order to say something of his/her own in it, or to interact with native speakers, is entirely foreign to this model. Scorning knowledge of a "colloquial or mercantile kind", MacCallum was also, therefore, "scornful of the 'practical' way of teaching languages, that is the conversational way ..." (Wykes 1958:23). However, the location of French (and German) in a set with English disturbed the certainties of the classical model from the outset: these were languages which were producing great works "now", and it is clear from what we know of the early work in French at Sydney University that there was considerable interest in, and value attached to the contemporary. But "language" and "literature" were not the only components: from very early on, philology held pride of place in Modern Languages. Partly, of course, this was a way of ensuring an understanding of the historical connections between the classics and modern literature; but there is also a more interesting fact to be observed. Philology as it was understood and professed in the 19th century was the study of the history of languages, and derived from the great theories of language evolution that mapped the "family relations" of the Indo-European group. It represented, therefore, everything that was most modern and up-to-date in 19th century linguistic scholarship; it was the field of the most exciting

research. G.G. Nicholson, the first professor of French in Australia, was appointed on the basis of his publications in this field, and he continued to work actively in it until his retirement (Barko 1991:10). The fact that it now no longer represents this form of modernity should not obscure the fact that its prominence in the modern languages curriculum set a tradition in which these subjects defined their own vitality in terms of their position in the scholarly avant-garde. Philology was the elite subject, a legitimate area for scholarly research. The rest - language learning and contemporary literature - belonged by contrast "squarely in the field of pedagogy" (Barko, personal communication). The place of linguistics, of language teaching methodology, and of theories of discourse in contemporary departments of French continues this tradition, in a sense, by allowing these things to occupy the place that used to belong to philology. But they do not quite occupy its place, being both more central, and less prestigious than philology in its heyday. We can set this beside a significant remark concerning the lasting effects of the direct method, despite its short life:

> The propagation of new ideas concerning the method of teaching modern languages meant that language teachers, even when they rejected the underlying assumptions, did at least start thinking about the methods in current use, no longer giving them unquestioned acceptance, and that the way was then clear for a considerable amount of less drastic, but yet valuable methodological experimentation. (Hick 1964:99-100)

If we can talk of a tradition of innovation in this way, it is because of two facts: one is that modern languages, as formal subjects of study, were defined self-consciously as "modern", with all that that implied in the nineteenth century; the other is that French was permitted (as German was not) a continuing tradition, gathering strength at precisely those times in history (see Introduction) when German was most out of favour. But we should add that the "tradition of innovation" is not uniformly the case across French studies, and that tradition, being a two-sided coin, flips in alternate ways in different situations.

> ◆ "Modernism" in the nineteenth century refers both to a movement in the history of ideas, in which the "modern" was set up against the dominance of the ancient or the classical, and to the revolutions - political, agricultural, urban and industrial - that have produced the "modern world". The modern school system, and the modern, "progressive" universities that were founded in Australia in the second half of the nineteenth century were founded by, and for, the rising mercantile and industrial classes for whom the set of values attaching to these massive social changes were unquestionable goods. A correlate was the study of beginnings, and of the stages traversed by humanity in the long march towards progress. Philology - in its nineteenth century form as a theory of the evolution of languages - took its place beside theories of the evolution of biological species and the geological structure of the universe, beside archeology and the anthropology of "primitive peoples", as the thoroughly modern disciplines whose object was to understand the foundations of modernity. ◆

In 1921, "G.G. Nicholson took up Australia's first Chair of French and, indeed, its first modern language Chair" (Barko 1991:9). In the same year, A.R. Chisholm went to Melbourne University as lecturer in French, to become Professor there in 1938 (Kerr 1972: ch.8, Wykes 1958:150). In their different ways, these two men marked the beginnings of French in Australia, and it is of some interest for our present purposes to rehearse their influence. Nicholson was legendary for his severity, and French at Sydney was the object of public complaints for the low number of passes recorded for students under his regime (Barko 1991:10 and fn.4). However, the legends might have obscured "the truly innovative nature of some aspects of his influence and teaching" (Barko 1991:10). Barko attributes him with "professionalising language teaching" in the University, and with introducing to it "what he called the 'new method' of teaching modern foreign languages. Contact with the living language, and understanding of the institutions, culture and lifestyle of the foreign nation (rather than just a familiarity with the literary discourse), learning to think, converse and write directly in the foreign language ..." (Barko 1991:10-11). Nicholson's work was carried out in parallel with the reforms in the schools, but although they were largely independent of one another, the two great innovative projects of the early part of the century were not in competition. The break between the two organisations came much later, and is attributed to much more narrowly defined institutional politics. Indeed, it is a notable fact that Nicholson abjured his own innovations in much the same way as the educational authorities of New South Wales abjured their own, though at a later period (Barko, personal communication). His later focus, the one that did the damage, was exclusively on grammatical accuracy. But in the days of his most positive influence Nicholson defined his profession by rejecting the models derived from instruction in Latin and Greek, and by stressing a concern for achieving fluency in French as a language of social interchange. Because of the prestige, and the spreading influence of his own graduates and colleagues, he must therefore be said to have defined the objectives of modern language teaching in Australia. The following history of the discipline is a history of innovations in methods designed to fulfil objectives which, though modified and refined by research into the nature of discourse and language in society, remain largely within that tradition.

The relative lack of coordination between the schools and the university in New South Wales is part of the story of the demise of the direct method, which lost momentum due to "the inadequate supply of teachers skilled in the use of the method and prepared to accept the arduous conditions resulting from the oral nature of the instruction" (Hick 1964:iv). As we have said, it was further undermined by "the temptation to develop a method that best achieved" examination successes, and the consequent reputation gained by teachers who could clock them up (Hick 1964:iv). The domination of the aims, and hence the methods of the schoolteachers by the University examining authorities had begun, with a period of conflict between the schools and the examiners regarding "standards" that lasted until the second world war. The impetus for this conflict is partly attributable to Nicholson, to whom Kerr also attributes the crisis in the production of school teachers of French in New South Wales. Following a period of difficult relations between the two organisations, Nicholson withdrew from contact with the schools (Kerr 1972:122 and throughout). The damage was somewhat repaired by his successors, and there is now a vigorous interest in French linguistics and language teaching methodology in the present Sydney

Department. There is also a significant connection with the secondary teachers' organisations, although in some accounts of its work, this area appears not to be central to the Department's self-image. As Professor Barko has said to us (private communication), the "dictatorial image" of the Sydney French Department, inherited from the Nicholson regime, had to be thrown off, a process that was completed by the "emancipation" of the secondary system from the universities in the 1970s. The story is similar in the case of most of the (old) universities. Other forms of engagement in the common enterprise of teaching French with the schools are now on the agenda throughout the country.

Nicholson's influence may have been limited among the student population by the legend of his severity, but it was extensive within the teaching of French in the universities of other states. Many of the early and most notable figures of French teaching in Australian universities were on Nicholson's staff or among his students. Of these, the most distinguished was A.R. Chisholm, an early student of Nicholson, MacCallum and Brennan, and the foundation professor at Melbourne. These two men trained and inspired the full set of the first generation of professors of French, together with many of their staff, in all the capital cities, with the sole exception of Brisbane. Without Nicholson's somewhat inhibiting manner, his objectives and his sense of the vocation of modern language teaching were propagated by these people, and the expansion of French between the 1930s and the 1960s testifies to the vitality of the work he had helped to establish. But the success is not solely attributable to him. Some thirty-six years before the University of Melbourne founded its chair of French, it appointed F. Maurice-Carton to a lectureship in French. He was by all accounts an extraordinarily energetic person, an advocate and accomplished practitioner of the direct method, of whom Wykes writes that he "inherited ... a one-year course, a handful of students, a dead language, an elementary study of literature. He bequeathed to Chisholm the three-year course, the honours school, a host of students, comprehensive courses of study. Under his energetic leadership French in the schools had become a living, human study" (Wykes 1958:146). This foundation was built on by Chisholm, a distinguished name in Australian literary life, and well-known for his ground-breaking research in French symbolist poetry. Chisholm had made his early mark in teacher training and the founding of the Modern Language Teachers Association and its journal (Kerr 1972: ch.8), after which he was also instrumental in founding the Modern Language Teachers' Association of Victoria, and the Australian Universities' Modern Language Association (Wykes 1958:175). His first appointment was to the Sydney Teachers College, where he was involved in the earliest days of the direct method, and it was as part of his commitment to this work that he took on the editorship of the *Modern Language Review of New South Wales*. The journal ceased publication shortly after Chisholm moved to Melbourne, partly because of financial difficulties. In Victoria, under the influence of Chisholm, French came to stand for all that was most vital in humane scholarship, and graduates from his department emerged with something that most called "love" of the language, passing it on to their students and participating in the vigorously cosmopolitan general culture of Melbourne. The surge in enrolments in French at Melbourne University came twenty years before the "spectacular" expansion of the Sydney department under Nicholson's successor, Ian Henning (Kerr 1972: ch.8; Barko 1991:11-12), and despite the fact that the once prominent Melbourne Department has of recent

years fallen on rather sorry times (see 2.3.1.0), its post-matriculation enrolments remain very strong. The Sydney Department has gone from strength to strength since Henning's tenure, and is now twice as big as its closest fellow departments elsewhere in Australia. By contrast with the early difficulties in New South Wales, the remarkable thing about the Melbourne tradition is its continuity, again attributable to Chisholm, whom Wykes credits with adapting French to the changing conditions in which it was taught (1958:174).

Chisholm's was not the only influence in Victoria. Parallel with his department was the work of the Melbourne Teachers' College. The two kinds of institution saw themselves as having quite different functions, and certainly different populations. They also, therefore, offered different curricula, the one focussed on pedagogical issues, the other, on the "content" of the discipline. In Melbourne, and no doubt in the other cities, this produced *de facto* two "classes" of teacher, the university departments supplying the independent schools, which did not require a teaching diploma, and the colleges supplying the government schools. It is only in recent years, firstly with the standardisation of certification requirements by government policies, which effectively brought the independent schools under the umbrella of the state, and with the very recent abolition of the two-tiered system of tertiary institutions, that the differences between the two groups have begun to disappear. The strength of French in Victoria is no doubt a product of its strength in both these places. In the early 1930s, the Lecturer in Method of Modern Languages was W.H. Frederick, a student of both Maurice-Carton and Chisholm. His name is associated with another significant moment of reform, the "brighter French movement", a modified direct method in which the activity of the learner was stressed (Wykes 1958:155). Frederick's work was followed up, in the years immediately preceding and following the second world war, by the work of Manuel Gelman. Not a pioneer, but an imaginative interpreter of the method, and by all accounts a "teacher's teacher", Gelman counts as one of the most influential recent figures in the history of French, and of teacher training, not only in Victoria, since he was much in demand in the MLT Associations of all the eastern states. This period is marked by the growth in general educational theory and research in the psychology of learning, and the systematic training of teachers in "method". The "methodology movement" derives directly from this. Gelman tells a story with a familiar shape: a gifted language student, he graduated with honours from the University of Melbourne and went to France, where, he discovered, "he couldn't say a thing". What he knew about French was considerable, his capacity to use it as a language for living was negligible. As a young man, before forming his vocation to teach the teachers to do better, he had a sharpened understanding of the problem through the fact that he was already a bilingual, and he formed the desire to change "French" from being a school subject, to being a language, in particular, a spoken language, placing considerable emphasis on the sounds of French, on the training of the ear and on pronunciation exercises. He was instrumental in reformulating the method in tune with the latest advances in learning theory. By this time, it relied on a curious construct called "basic French", derived from the most frequently used words in the French lexicon. The teaching goals were defined by a graded progression through "basic French" starting with 100 words, moving to 300 in the second year, up to 600, and so on, and a similar graded progression through the morphology and the syntactic structures. All the

models in the text-books were written in basic French, and the method could aim at, and sometimes achieve, mastery of quantified chunks of French in this way. It also resulted in the naive astonishment of the students it produced when, in French speaking countries, they heard three-year-olds handling the subjunctive. Basic French exists only in the text-books, and the method depended absolutely on the inventive exercises of the teachers, to become the basis of the extrapolatory skills required for genuine linguistic competence. Clearly, this was one of Gelman's great strengths as a teacher trainer. But without appropriate teacher training, this method, like any other, became a set of text-books and exercises, and it, like its earlier cousin, was appropriated by a centralised examination system and its rigidly controlled syllabus.

The modified direct method held sway over French teaching, and hence, over the methods of other languages, well into the 1960s, and one of its most durable texts-books (Horan and Wheeler's *A New French Course*) is still used in the junior French courses at the Victorian Distance Education Centre. One of the most interesting, and most significant moments in the history of language teaching methodologies, concerns the clash between the proponents of this method - by this stage, well-entrenched, traditional, and standing as the "tried and true" - with the champions of the new audio-lingual methods, led by Wilga Rivers and her colleagues. The clash of the "old" and the "new" took the form, in Victoria, of the clash between the "old" University, Melbourne, and the modernists at the recently established Monash University. In the anecdotal accounts of this clash, it came to a dramatic head at a meeting of the MLTAV, where two "phalanxes" within the standing committee for French staged the debate for the rest of the Association. Similar debates are recorded in the associations of the other states, but Victoria was something of a focus for the rest of the country at this period.

> ◆ Explaining the dominance of the profession in Australia by Victoria during this period, Ivan Barko writes (personal communication).
>
> Thanks no doubt to Chisholm and his team, later also to Ron Jackson, thanks also to Frederick, to Gelman, and also to Olive Wykes, but mainly to Keith Horwood, Melbourne became the national MLTA headquarters, and the federal body was founded there. *Babel* was published there by Horwood, and he ran the best, indeed the only, language resource centre in the country. ◆

Again in the anecdotal accounts, the view of the traditionalists is that the audio-lingual methods won the battle, becoming dominant in Australia as elsewhere for about a decade, but they lost the war. Strengthened by this analysis of recent events, departments of French in some of the older universities, notably Melbourne and Adelaide, felt vindicated in their resistance to changes in method. A picture that emerges from the mid 1970s onwards shows that the more newly established universities - insofar as they had departments of French - adopted progressive methods and curricula appropriate to them, whereas the older universities persisted with their familiar practices. This is true for the contrast between Adelaide and Flinders, between the University of Western Australia and, latterly,

Edith Cowan University, and between Melbourne and both La Trobe and Monash. The exceptions are Sydney and Queensland.

In one of his addresses to the MLTAV on the matter of the "audio-lingual debate", Manuel Gelman pointed out that the effectiveness of the method relied on a situation of intensive instruction such as was available for authoritative models of language teaching, for instance at the Defence Forces language school at Point Cook. No analogy with these models was valid with the practical situation of language instruction in schools. In interview, he also pointed out that the "Melbourne contingent" lost the battle because it had lost contact with the schools, and no-one, bar himself, who was arguing against the new methods had any practical experience of secondary teaching. This was, in his estimation, one of the trump-cards held by Rivers. Since the same battle was being lost in the same way around the world, the analysis is only a partial account of the forces at work. But the two arguments are valid, and contain important truths for the discussion of method even today. Ideal methodologies in ideal situations may translate into policy, but they do not translate directly into implementation "on the ground". Timetabling, teacher availability, the school community, the practical circumstances of the teaching - even, and especially, the kind of classroom and the method of delivery - all affect decisions and conspire to determine outcomes. We will return to this point in our discussion of French in the schools (2.2); but it is worth noting in our survey of the history of methods of French teaching because it helps us to read that history as a cautionary tale. It was already clear in the 1870s that nothing useful could be done with French instruction in the Universities without beginning in the schools (Kerr 1972: ch.1); Gelman's argument serves to make the further point that both the success and the failure of the learning outcomes of any LOTE policy, no matter how well-researched and how theoretically sound, depends upon curricular, methodological, and politico-institutional cooperation between the two kinds of institution. While not all LOTE teaching takes place in formal educational institutions, or in the school-university continuum, this nexus is sufficiently dominant for it to be of central importance in all policy-making.

It is important to understand that the persuasive power of one method over another is not the effect of pure theory, or even of proven empirical research. The story of the battles of the methods in Victoria is above all a political story. With the Teachers College and Melbourne University joining forces to dominate not only the MLTAV but also the local Alliance Française, the ABC school broadcasts and the external examinations in French, the "successful" method was the politically successful method. It could command the resources, the energies, and the allegiances of the key people in language teaching across the state. What happened in the late 1960s was that this *political* power was lost to an alternative method, which was promoted by the sales pitch and the money of powerful transnational electronics companies. Other political forces - in this case, ideological rather than institutional - were at work in the next downfall. Analysing the audio-lingual method as "behaviorist" and "skinnerian", Chomsky sought to theorise language acquisition on the basis of a "Language Acquisition Device" seated deep in the neuro-cognitive structures of the brain. Drills, he argued, could never promote the cognitive development necessary to a child's understanding of the deep-structures of the linguistic system, the rules it needed to acquire in order to extrapolate creatively. The pendulum swung

away from structural drills to cognitive creativity, then again away from cognitive creativity to socio-linguistics and functional-notional syllabus design (McMeniman 1992), this last having cornered the ESL market in Australia by successfully targeting the syllabus-policy nexus in most of the state ministries. Thus are born orthodoxies. Many writers on methodology who are not pushing a barrow of their own agree that "students learn about as much [under a new method] as before" (Swan, quoted in McMeniman 1992:4) - provided that whatever method is in use has available to it the necessary resources, energetic policy and implementation devices, and the enthusiasm of the teachers. Against this, McMeniman argues that the "communicative approach" "has brought about a *qualitative* difference in the competencies of L2 learners" (1992:4). Hopes are high; but the long-term and widespread success of the new methods will depend on the competencies of the teachers and the flexibility of administrative and curricular decisions. Methods are not magic; they can only produce valuable outcomes with real political and professional will.

McMeniman's useful history of methods (1992) is not specific to the history of French. In particular, the Chomskyan revolution had less impact on French teaching in Australia than in the USA, since Australian researchers in French tend still to look first to "native" French theory; and it had more impact in the teaching of other languages that had a shorter history as LOTEs in schools. Likewise, functional-notional syllabi inspired by the work of M.A.K. Halliday have not been markedly significant in the traditions of French teaching, despite the widespread adoption of this work in Australia. It is important to remember that the teaching of French as a foreign language (*Français langue étrangère*, or FLE) has a very long history in France, and has been heavily supported by government funding and resource allocation since the early 1950s. This is for two reasons: the first is that France has attracted migrants from a wide variety of countries, many of them to study for professional careers, all of them needing French to do so; FLE centres are widespread and well-staffed, and research into methods is vigorous. This means that the "native French tradition" is less an adaptation of theoretical linguistics than a tradition of *didactique des langues* in its own right; in particular, the early focus on discourse linguistics in France meant that research in these traditions stole a march on work in methodology inspired primarily by psycho-linguistics, and was adapted early to methodologies of teaching. The second is that French foreign policy has for many years included an energetic cultural policy; the Alliance Française is an unofficial, but supported, arm of this policy, which, since the early part of the century, saw its mission as propagating the French language in those parts of what is now known as the Third World that were not directly under the influence of the French colonial administration. Under de Gaulle, it was systematic government policy to promote French against the increasing domination of English. Organisations such as the BELC and the CREDIF were born, and teaching diplomas were available not only to French people, but to the many foreigners who went as graduates to France to enhance their competency as French teachers. French teaching was big business, and these forces readily combined with the prestige of French as a cultural and educational language. Many Australian French graduates have continued to take higher degrees in FLE, returning to Australia as teachers either of French or of ESL. Combined with the wealth of methods and materials produced by the French FLE "industry", the training that these people have brought back with them, and their interest in the discipline of second-

language teaching as a genuine research area, have informed the traditions of French teaching in this country in very specific ways. Because of the quantitative importance of French from the 1930s onwards, this has *de facto* fed into the general profession of LOTE teaching in Australia.

The chronicle of methodological reform that we have sketched for French in Australian educational institutions is not a local phenomenon. It is common to practitioners of language instruction across the world and throughout the twentieth century. Reviewing this history, McMeniman cites Swan, who describes the "tendency to jettison all in favour of the new" as "the characteristic sound of a new breakthrough in language teaching theory ... a scream, a splash, and a strangled cry, as once again the baby is thrown out with the bathwater" (McMeniman, 1992:2); as she points out, "the losers in the whole unhappy picture are the long-suffering teachers" (1992:3), whose professional confidence, and hence their ability to implement new methods, are disabled by changes for which they are ill-equipped in their training. The teachers are the major resource of any LOTE policy, not the methods as such. On-going professional development, and appropriately specialised teacher-training, are the *sine qua non* of enhanced learning outcomes. We will return to this point in (2.5).

2.2 Schools

The DEET Survey of language learning in Australian schools (1988:21) compares student numbers in selected LOTES in 1983 and 1988. French shows a decrease of 29% over that period (from 745 students per 10000, to 530 per 10000). The report draws attention to the drop in French and German students (German suffered a decrease of 31%), but greater decreases were experienced in Hebrew (33%) and Latin (40%).

2.2.1 Primary

It is not our object here to rehearse the arguments for the inclusion of a LOTE in the young child's education. Their influence has led to an upsurge in primary LOTE in Australia, but the various states have responded differently, which may explain the varying fortunes of French. For example, in systems where the push for primary LOTE has coincided with a push for community languages, French may not have held the strong position it has at other levels. This was, until recently, the case in Victoria, but there is now a growing number of schools in all sectors that offer primary French.

Given the relatively short recent history of wide-scale primary LOTE teaching, the primary figures tend, one feels, to give an optimistic picture of LOTE learning in each state, swelling the overall total of LOTE students. Whether the increase in primary LOTE will lead to increases in secondary enrolments, and eventually adult proficiency remains to be seen. Furthermore, as will be noted in the section on transition, the nature of the influence of primary enrolments on secondary is not simple. The implied straight follow-on effect of enrolments in a particular LOTE is by no means guaranteed, and the effect may be more of an openness to the learning of a (any) LOTE.

One of the difficulties in presenting statistics, as we must below, is that in the totals differences between programs are lost: the total number of primary students of French says nothing about whether these pupils are only experiencing the language for one semester, to raise their "language awareness", or if they are part of a long-term program which might be expected to lead to language proficiency. For this reason, wherever it has been possible, we have given a breakdown of students by levels, since this allows us to make hypotheses about the lengths of some programs.

Whatever the reason for offering French, there are strategic reasons for it (or any other language) to occupy ground in the primary system. As one language adviser put it, if French were seen not to be a readily available language option in the blossoming of primary LOTE, this could well be taken as an indication of a lack of faith in the value of French, and it would be even more difficult to justify the teaching of it in secondary schools. Furthermore, if the solution to the transition problem is to be developed by working from the primary school up, that is, by ensuring that students in existing primary programs are able to continue their studies, French must be represented in primary schools to ensure the future of secondary studies in the language.

We now present some details about French in the different states and territories, and in the systems in those administrative areas, before making some general comments.

Australian Capital Territory

Government System

For 1988, statistics are available from two sources, and the figures given do not match: those of the DEET survey (from the second half of 1988) are smaller than those indicated by the information provided by the Department of Education and the Arts, drawn from the ACTSA Survey of Foreign Language Teaching, administered in February of the same year.

Hrs/wk	Kind.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All years
BOYS								
≤ 1 hr	50	71	54	85	83	77	76	496
> hr	-	-	23	20	18	26	29	116
total	50	71	77	105	101	103	105	612
	(44)	(109)	(89)	(107)	(129)	(112)	(114)	(704)
GIRLS								
≤ 1 hr	54	69	52	101	86	68	59	489
> hr	-	-	27	22	18	28	34	129
total	54	69	79	123	104	96	93	618
	(42)	(110)	(93)	(128)	(139)	(120)	(120)	(752)
ALL								
≤ 1 hr	104	140	106	186	169	145	135	985
> hr	-	-	50	42	36	54	63	245
total	104	140	156	228	205	199	198	1230
	(86)	(219)	(182)	(235)	(268)	(232)	(234)	(1456)

Table 1
Primary French students in Government schools in the ACT - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988 and ACT Dept. of Education and the Arts
(Bracketed totals in the table are figures from the Dept. of Education and the Arts)

French was the most studied LOTE, with 29% of the total, according to the DEET 1988 survey. The ACTSA figures also show it as dominant, with one third of enrolments.

Year	Male	Female	Total	% of LOTE enrolments
1983			1080	41%
1987			1415	37%
1988			1456	33%
1989	722	742	1464	30%
1990	908	976	1884	26%
1991	986	1131	2117	27%

Table 2
Primary French enrolments in ACT government schools, 1983-1991
From ACT Department of Education and the Arts

French numbers have increased over the period, and although the actual share French has of the primary LOTE market has decreased, it has continued to be the most studied LOTE in ACT government primary schools.

Catholic System
In 1988, French was very weakly represented in the Catholic system: Japanese and Italian are the other languages studied, and French accounted for only 30 of the 1356 LOTE enrolments (2.2%).

Hrs/wk	Kind.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All years
BOYS								
≤ 1 hr	-	-	4	2	-	-	-	6
> hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
total	-	-	4	2	-	-	-	6
GIRLS								
≤ 1 hr	1	2	4	5	4	5	3	24
> hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
total	1	2	4	5	4	5	3	24
ALL								
≤ 1 hr	1	2	8	7	4	5	3	30
> hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
total	1	2	8	7	4	5	3	30

Table 3
Primary French students in Catholic schools in the ACT - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

According to figures from the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn, French was not taught to primary students in Catholic schools during the years 1988-1991.

Hrs/wk	Kind.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All years
BOYS								
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
> hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	60
total	0	0	0	0	0	0	60	60
GIRLS								
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
> hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ALL								0
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
> hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	60
total	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	60

Table 4
Primary French students in Independent schools in the ACT - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Only three LOTEs were studied in the independent system: German accounted for 475 enrolments, and Indonesian and French each had 60.

By 1991, French enrolments had increased to 135 males, 150 females, a total of 285.

New South Wales

Government System

In NSW government schools there is no official primary language policy. Such focus as there is in primary languages seems to be on community language programs and these do not include French.

This situation is reflected in the figures provided by the Department of Education: statistics on community language programs are more readily available than those for other languages. In the figures supplied, details of primary non-community language programs are only given for 1988, when there were 444 primary French students. While numbers of LOTE teachers working in the primary sector for the years 1988-1991 are given, no French teachers are listed. In the 1988 LOTE survey, in which data for NSW Government schools dates from 1987, French is not listed amongst those subjects studied. There are two French Language Advisers, both of whom work in the primary and secondary sectors.

Catholic System

Hrs/wk	Kind.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All years
BOYS								
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	6	11	-	-	17
> hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
total	-	-	-	6	11	-	-	17
GIRLS								
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	13	10	9	12	44
> hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
total	-	-	-	13	10	9	12	44
ALL								
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	19	21	9	12	61
> hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
total	-	-	-	19	21	9	12	61

Table 5
Primary French students in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

No other data are available.

Independent System

Kindergarten - Year 2	Year 3 - Year 6	Total
508	1875	2383

Table 6
Primary students learning French in NSW Independent Schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

No breakdown by gender, or by hours studied per week is available.

With this total, French was at that stage by far the most studied language in primary school, accounting for 43% of enrolments. No figures for subsequent years have been supplied.

Northern Territory

Government System

As of November 1991, the NT Board of Studies had not yet approved a primary French syllabus. French is represented in Government primary schools, but is not one of the major languages taught.

Year	Male	Female	Total
1988[1]	34	33	67
1989	na	na	17
1990	na	na	58

Table 7
Primary French students in NT government schools, 1988-1990
From DEET survey and NT Department of Education

Year Level	Male	Female	Total
6	12	9	21
7	15	13	28
TOTAL	27	22	49

Table 8
Primary French students in NT government schools 1991
From NT Department of Education

Catholic and Independent Systems
No information is to hand regarding primary French in the Catholic or Independent sectors, apart from the fact that it is not listed amongst those languages taught in Catholic primary schools, in the DEET 1988 survey.

Queensland

Government System
There has been a great increase in primary LOTE numbers over the last few years, as measures have been taken by the Department of Education to initiate new LOTE programs. The focus is on the later years of primary school, as the LOTE policy works towards the introduction of programs which in fact go across the primary-secondary divide. The goal is that language programs be, if not strictly compulsory, at least very widely available from Years 6 to 8. The objective is language learning, working towards proficiency, and not the language sampling which used to be the stuff of many primary, as well as grade 8, language courses.[2] The state government is funding in-service training courses for teachers, as well as the preparation of materials. It is planned that this expansion of LOTEs in Years 6-8 would be followed (1995-2000) by their introduction into the remaining years of primary school (Braddy 1991:4). This project is a point of pride for the Minister of Education:

> It is a central part of our policy that language learning should be introduced at the primary level, for the evident advantages it give students in developing their language skills. We are the first state in Australia to undertake this positive strategy of primary-based language learning and to plan to make it available to all students in our schools. (Braddy 1991:4)

The introduction of languages in the 6-8 Year range began in 1991. Thus, while the statistics show around 6000 primary children learning French in 1991, in a letter from the Languages and Cultures Unit, it is stated that nearly 5000 of these are in programmes in Years 6 and 7. According to Braddy "We aim, by 1994, to have all students in Years 6, 7 and 8 able to learn a LOTE" (1991:4). The wording here suggests that LOTE study would not be compulsory.

The success of the implementation of this policy can be gauged from a comparison of the statistics from 1991 with those dating from 1988, when "only 94 primary schools (9% of the total number of schools) offered a languages program, and only 13 languages were taught" (Berthold 1991a:17).

The number of primary students of LOTE in 1989 was 8 600. However, by July 1991, the state minister for education was reporting 30000 children learning a

LOTE, French (16% of LOTE students) being the third most studied LOTE, after Japanese 37% and German 17% (Braddy 1991:3).

Hrs/wk	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	All years
≤ 1 hr	45	44	129	31	37	142	267	695
> 1 hr	-	-	-	-	50	57	24	131
total	45	44	129	31	87	199	291	826

Table 9
Primary French students in Queensland Government Schools 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

At this time, French enrolments comprised 6.5% of the total primary LOTE enrolments, but was the third best represented language, behind Italian (8 710 students) and Mandarin (969 students).

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	All years
total	157	214	268	374	347	2361	2287	6008

Table 10
Primary French students in Queensland Government Schools 1991
From Qld Department of Education

French was now the fourth most studied LOTE in primary schools, behind Japanese (13086), Italian (10512) and German (6094).

In working towards this expansion of primary LOTEs, a non-specific LOTE syllabus was first prepared, Languages Other Than English (Draft) (Curriculum Development Services, Department of Education, Queensland, 1989). As described in its foreword, the history of this syllabus is as follows:

> In 1988 The Australian Language Levels (ALL) Project produced [...] The Australian Language Levels (ALL) Guidelines [...]. In 1987 the Queensland Department of Education published The P-10 Curriculum Framework and in 1989 The P-10 Language Education Framework. This syllabus draws extensively from all 3 documents.

There are as yet no language specific syllabi. The Department of Education then went on to produce materials to be used. Kits comprise a student activity book, an instruction book, and audio cassettes prepared by native speakers. In view of the general inexperience in Queensland of primary LOTE, these kits are fairly detailed in their accounts of each lesson. As teachers become more at ease and practised in the modes of language teaching and learning being introduced, it is supposed that they would develop their own materials. While the kits were produced for the Queensland government system, the Department is looking at selling them to the private schools, and to schools interstate.

The implementation of this program, designed to take students into secondary school, is based on a cluster model: a secondary school serves as base to a cluster of primary schools, and a secondary LOTE teacher visits the primary school. The model is that the secondary teacher should provide two half hour lessons, and that this should be supplemented on the other three days, by ten minutes of language class conducted by the usual primary classroom teacher. This means that there is a total of only 1.5 hours per week, which is meagre, given the avowed goal of language learning (rather

than "awareness"). A member of staff from the Languages and Cultures Unit is training interested primary classroom teachers in French, so that they might provide better back-up to the secondary teachers. It is projected that there would eventually be specialist LOTE teachers stationed in the primary schools, in the same way as there are now subject-specific music or physical education teachers. While there are undoubted advantages to having specialist LOTE teachers in the primary school, Wales (1987:127), in a report on community language programs in Victorian primary schools points to some of the difficulties of languages being seen as not belonging to the mainstream, and these we will take up in general discussion.

When a school is considering the choice of a language, there is consultation between the various bodies concerned, including the parents and the Education Department, the latter being concerned to maintain some kind of balance between languages (but see our introduction on the issue of balance). According to a spokesperson from the Queensland Department of Education, it takes "a fair bit of convincing" from the Department for a school to consent to a French program, because "it's not the flavour of the month". If this metaphor is a fair indication of what is occurring, then it should serve as a reminder to those who see in the popularity of other languages the death knell for French. It is in the nature of flavours of the month that they should cease to be that. The important thing is that French have a solid base of support. We suppose that this would be grounded in factors resilient to the short-term changes of fashion. There is some evidence in the figures to suggest that the fluctuations are not, in any case, as great as is sometimes supposed.

Catholic System
French is not strong in the Catholic sector.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	All years
total	-	-	-	-	-	10	12	22

Table 11
Primary French students in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Brisbane 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

French enrolments constituted the smallest group of LOTE students, with 0.5% of the total.

According to figures on the Archdiocese of Brisbane received from the Queensland Catholic Education Commission, there were 78 primary French students in that region in 1990 (in Year 5 at one school), and none in 1991.

Independent System
There has been measurable growth in primary French in the independent system, but it has not been as spectacular as that in government schools.

Hrs/wk	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	All years
BOYS								
≤ 1 hr	9	7	4	4	34	63	185	306
> hr	-	-	-	-	9	16	10	35
total	9	7	4	4	43	79	195	341
GIRLS								
≤ 1 hr	10	9	22	27	20	99	279	466
> hr	-	-	-	-	11	6	10	27
total	10	9	22	27	31	105	289	493
TOTAL								
≤ 1 hr	19	16	26	31	54	162	464	772
> hr	-	-	-	-	20	22	20	62
total	19	16	26	31	74	184	484	834

Table 12
Primary French students in Queensland Independent Schools 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

French enrolments represented 35% of total primary LOTE enrolments, ahead of German, with 21%.

According to a survey of the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland (1989:6) (see next paragraph for details of this survey), French was taught in 9 primary schools in 1988.

The figures in the following two tables are based on those supplied by the AISQ, from a survey of its members and non-member, non-government, non-Catholic schools. It should however be noted that some Catholic schools belong to this association, and will therefore be covered in this section. It should also be said that although main LOTE programs are all included in the tables, some LOTE students may not have been counted: "In some schools languages other than English are offered as extra-curricular activities as a means of introducing the LOTE. Students undertaking this mode of study are not included in the following tables and lists" (AISQ survey 1989).

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	All years
male	9	7	14	53	59	73	108	323
female	13	10	24	72	110	206	214	649
total	22	17	38	125	169	279	322	972[3]

Table 13
Primary French students in Queensland Independent Schools 1989
From AISQ Survey 1989

Primary French students constituted the second largest LOTE group, with 24% of the total, behind Japanese which had 37% of enrolments. In 1990, French was still in second position to Japanese, which had increased its share of enrolments (French 22%, Japanese 50%).

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	All years
male	11	11	25	130	74	162	104	517
female	9	12	32	88	85	115	351	692
total	20	23	57	218	159	277	455	1209

Table 14
Primary French students in Queensland Independent Schools 1990
From AISQ Survey 1990

According to the figures supplied in the survey, French had increased in numbers (even more than the totals presented showed), but the number of schools in which French was studied had decreased from 13 (of a total of 25 primary schools offering a LOTE) in 1989 to 11 (again, out of 25) in 1990. However, according to the survey of 1990, two schools were intending to introduce primary French in that year. This survey shows a projected total of 16 independent primary schools offering French in 1991.

South Australia

In South Australia, primary languages have a longer history than in some other states. Ian Laurie tells us (personal communication) that "profiting from the Tasmanian experience, French and German teaching were introduced into Government Primary Schools in 1966" with other languages following later. In 1986 "15 languages were being taught in 200 primary schools" (Berthold 1991a:17).

Government System

Hrs/wk	Kind.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	All years
≤ 1 hr	113	185	239	332	315	437	219	258	2098
> 1 hr	57	58	72	149	252	305	449	449	1791
total	170	243	311	481	567	742	668	707	3889

Table 15
Primary French students in SA Government Schools 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

At this time, French enrolments made up 13% of the total primary LOTE enrolments. The LOTEs with greater enrolments were German (9788), Italian (6799), Greek (4327).

In 1990, French was taught in 33 government schools, to 4407 primary students. A French Adviser dedicated to primary schools is employed. French is one of the state's eight priority languages.

The primary sector is certainly that in which French growth can be expected. While French is seen as being too well represented in the secondary sector, and is indeed being removed from a number of schools, 1990 plans for LOTE in the various administrative areas show French being regularly recommended for primary schools. In the Northern District, for example, in 1990, it was projected that between 1991 and 1995 (inclusive), 12 new primary French programs would be introduced, with a further two schools to take up either French or Spanish. No primary French programs were already in place: there were 12 secondary schools offering French in the

same area, one of which was phasing out French. In the Adelaide area, Primary French was better established in 1990, already being present in five schools. It was to be withdrawn from one of these, but introduced into eight more. (French was taught in 13 high schools, 3 of which were to lose it. There were no new secondary programs planned.) A 1990 draft for the development of languages in the Southern Area is a plan obviously based on a consideration of clusters, or at least feeder primary schools. Once again, it is in the primary sector that expansion is to take place, although here several schools are apparently hesitating between French and other languages. Twelve primary schools were offering French in 1990, with a further seven with definite plans for its introduction by 1994. French was a possibility for five more. (French was established in 14 secondary schools: it was to be introduced to one more, and removed from three and possibly four.)

The existence of such plans testifies to the implementation of governmental policy to extend the teaching of primary LOTEs. We quote Mike Rann, Minister of Employment and Further Education, in the Foreword to "Tertiary Languages Planning: A Policy for South Australia": "Recently, the State Government announced its plans to ensure that by 1995 primary school children in South Australia are able to learn a second language". In the report itself, concern is expressed about some of the programs which are offered: "In SA Education Department primary schools in 1988, there were 26.16% of students learning a LOTE. But many of these students were not learning a language for the minimum recommended by LOTE guidelines, and too many students only learned a LOTE for one to three years. Also, the quality of some of the programs is of great concern."

We have received no further information on SA government schools.

Catholic System

Primary French numbers have decreased in the Catholic system, from over 500 in 1988 to 220 in 1991.

Hrs/wk	Kind.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	All years
BOYS									
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
> 1 hr	14	-	45	29	40	27	49	60	264
total	14 [-]	- [14]	45	29	40 [33]	27 [82]	49	60 [8]	264 [260]
GIRLS									
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
> 1 hr	17	-	44	23	40	26	48	112	310
total	17 [-]	- [17]	44	23	40 [24]	26 [83]	48 [62]	112 [20]	310 [273]
ALL									
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
> 1 hr	31	-	89	52	80	53	97	172	574
total	31 [-]	- [31]	89	52	80 [57]	53 [165]	97 [111]	172 [28]	574 [536]

Table 16

Primary French students in SA Catholic Schools 1988

From DEET Survey 1988 and the SA Catholic Education Office.[4]

According to the figures of the DEET survey, French was the second most popular LOTE (with 15% of the total), but was a long way behind Italian, which, with 3 163 students, had 82% of primary LOTE enrolments. One can

infer that the two surveys were administered at different times, and that in upper years, there is apparently less stability in the French offerings.

Gender	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Total	%LOTE enrol
Male		5	37	21	40	4	1	108	2.1%
Female		1	40	17	49	3	2	112	1.9%
Both		6	77	38	89	7	3	220	2.0%

Table 17
Primary French Students in SA schools 1991
From figures supplied by SACEO

French, as a percentage of LOTE enrolments is now very minor. It has been overtaken by Indonesian, German, Japanese and Vietnamese. Only Polish and Spanish had fewer enrolments (76 and 64 respectively). Italian is still dominant.

Independent System
While the DEET survey of 1988 reports that only German was taught in independent primary schools, figures supplied by the South Australian Independent Schools Board Incorporated (SAISB) show students learning eight other languages, including French.

Year	No. of Schools	Gender	Recpt	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Total	% LOTE enrol
1988	11	M	33	36	35	60	43	46	52	67	392	25%
		F	56	60	80	99	87	101	197	224	904	40%
		Both	89	96	135	159	130	147	249	291	1296	34%
1989	8	M	40	34	42	25	53	50	56	40	340	22%
		F	59	43	63	75	90	115	172	166	783	32%
		Both	99	77	105	100	143	165	228	206	1123	28%
1990	12	M	28	32	34	30	44	92	106	189	555	20%
		F	52	54	59	80	71	167	184	179	846	30%
		Both	80	86	93	110	115	259	290	368	1401	25%
1991	13	M	72	72	79	77	88	117	124	209	838	22%
		F	81	94	89	83	131	182	181	219	1060	26%
		Both	153	166	168	160	219	299	305	428	1898	24%

Table 18
Primary French students in SA independent schools 1988-1991
From figures supplied by SAISB

After a bad year in 1989, French is showing numerical increases in 1991. LOTE enrolments are obviously increasing too as the French percentage declines. The disparity between male and female enrolments is noteworthy.

Tasmania

Ian Laurie reminds us (personal communication) that "in 1965 it was Tasmania which was leading the field in the teaching of French at the Primary level". There is a regrettable gap in our understanding - not to say our account - of the history of this initiative.

Government System

In November 1991 there was no government primary LOTE policy in Tasmania, although this was under review. Various primary schools had however mounted what were termed "language awareness programs" and French was one of the languages concerned.

Hrs/wk	Kind.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All years
BOYS								
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	4	49	32	14	99
> hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
total	-	-	-	4	49	32	14	99
GIRLS								
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	3	45	26	1	75
> hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
total	-	-	-	3	45	26	1	75
ALL								
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	7	94	58	15	174
> hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
total	-	-	-	7	94	58	15	174

Table 19
Primary French students in Tasmanian state schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

French, with 36% of LOTE enrolments, was the second most popular LOTE, after Indonesian, with 41% of enrolments.

By 1992 the numbers had increased, although the percentage of total enrolments had decreased to 20%. French was now the third most studied primary LOTE, after Japanese (35%) and Indonesian (22%).

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
No. of students	97	88	8	10	187	32	422

Table 20
Primary French students in Tasmanian government schools - 1992
From Curriculum Services

Catholic System

According to the DEET Survey of 1988, there were no primary students in Catholic schools in Tasmania studying French that year. The Catholic Education Office was unable to supply any statistics, since it does not hold that information.

Independent System

In 1988, French appeared to be best developed in Independent primary schools.

Hrs/wk	Kind.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All years
BOYS								
≤ 1 hr	12	7	6	6	14	31	37	113
> hr	41	7	20	13	-	-	16	97
total	53	14	26	19	14	31	53	210
GIRLS								
≤ 1 hr	6	7	29	33	46	29	65	215
> hr	39	19	16	11	-	-	13	98
total	45	26	45	44	46	29	78	313
ALL								
≤ 1 hr	18	14	35	39	60	60	102	328
> hr	80	26	36	24	-	-	29	195
total	98	40	71	63	60	60	131	523

Table 21
Primary French students in Tasmanian Independent schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

French dominated, accounting for 59% of enrolments, ahead of Japanese with 17%. Note that French was available in every year of primary school.

Victoria

Government System

The governmental push for LOTE studies in schools has started in the secondary system, but in the long term, all primary school students should be able to learn a LOTE, beginning in Prep. (Schools Programs Division, Department of School Education, 1991).

In the government system 24% of primary schools have some kind of language program, in which 13% of primary students are involved (DSEV 1992:22). This participation rate is 6% higher than that of 1989 (DSEV 1992:23). French, with 1774 students, or 3.0% of the total LOTE enrolments, in 1991 was the seventh most studied language, after Italian (54.0%), Japanese (10.7%), German (6.7%), Greek (6.0%), Indonesian (5.5%) and Mandarin (4.6%) (DSEV 1992:23). French appears to be offered in a total of 24 schools in 1991 (DSEV 1992:37,39), with 10 schools reportedly considering introducing it in 1992. French has therefore expanded since 1988.

In 1988, French was one of the minor LOTEs, only accounting for 0.93% of enrolments. This has changed since.

French gains most of its enrolments through programs other than those run by supernumerary staff provided by the Ministry of Education, or by ethnic community organizations. Schools providing such programs do so "from within their own resources, have arrangements of various kinds with other schools and community groups, or have other sources of funding" (DSEV 1992:10).

Hrs/wk	Kind.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Mixed	All years
BOYS									
≤ 1 hr	28	29	26	9	21	23	7	-	143
> 1 hr	3	2	5	1	7	7	5	3	33
total	31	31	31	10	28	30	12	3	176
GIRLS									
≤ 1 hr	34	31	27	10	28	12	6	-	148
> 1 hr	1	1	2	3	10	2	6	6	31
total	35	32	29	13	38	14	12	6	179
ALL									
≤ 1 hr	62	60	53	19	49	35	13	-	291
> 1 hr	4	3	7	4	17	9	11	9	64
total	66	63	60	23	66	44	24	9	355

Table 22
Primary French in Victorian state schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

"For example, schools are making arrangements with neighbouring schools to share a language specialist teacher or a member of staff with a LOTE background. Some have discretionary special needs staff; parents and community groups sponsor programs; secondary teachers and volunteers are used" (DSEV 1992:22). Supernumerary staff teach 277 pupils, at two schools, one of which is Camberwell Primary School (see Section 2.2.3.1). The remaining 1497 students are in "other" programs (22 schools) (DSEV 1992:22-28). This appears consistent with reports about the lack of government support for French in the past, although we should note the support provided for the innovative program at Camberwell.

According to the School Programs Division, "increasingly primary schools will implement language programs within staffing establishment. Case studies of schools, districts and clusters which have successfully offered language programs within staffing establishment are being collected and will be published in the near future" (SPDDESEV 1991).

Of the 277 students in programs staffed by supernumerary teachers, in 1991, 217 were in second language programs, 60 in "other". The "other" presumably accounts for the program at Camberwell (DSEV 1992:25).

Of the 1497 students in programs resourced in other ways: 1215 were in second language programs, 272 in combined language programs or language awareness programs, 10 in "other" (DSEV 1992:28).

Wales (1988:33) has questioned the value of some of these programs:

> However, in the range of program types suggested as possible in the guidelines (Victoria, Education Department 1985), there are programs for second-language acquisition 'which is the learning of another language', and then another type called language awareness 'which is introducing children to another language.'

Wales goes on to discuss some of the problems raised by the use of these terms.

French, predictably, is not taught through mother-tongue development programs, and so does not have the same support as some other languages in the Victorian focus on community languages. In secondary schools, however, community languages have been less dominant in LOTE choice and French is still strong at this level.

Primary students may also enrol in the Victorian School of Languages, but in primary enrolments are not mentioned in the report of the Department of School Education (1992:29).

Catholic System

Although French is not listed amongst those LOTEs studied in Catholic primary schools in 1988, figures supplied by the Catholic sector show that French was offered in 2 schools in 1988, and was taken by 542 pupils.

Year	No. of PS	Prep.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total
1989	2	63	73	71	72	73	74	66	492
1990	4	68	66	74	65	57	266	252	848

Table 23
Primary French enrolments in Catholic primary schools in Victoria - 1989, 1990
From Catholic Schools Victoria

Independent System

The Victorian Independent Primary system seems to be where French is flourishing.

Hrs/wk	Kind.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All years
BOYS								
≤ 1 hr	45	54	40	16	59	98	123	435
> hr	-	7	28	19	45	24	117	240
total	45	61	68	35	104	122	240	675
GIRLS								
≤ 1 hr	58	77	36	60	95	195	267	788
> hr	-	4	32	97	119	173	152	577
total	58	81	68	157	214	368	419	1365
TOTAL								
≤ 1 hr	103	131	76	76	154	293	390	1223
> hr	-	11	60	116	164	197	269	817
total	103	142	136	192	318	490	659	2040

Table 24
Students of French in Independent Schools in Victoria - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

French was the most studied LOTE in Victorian Independent Primary schools, accounting for 26% of enrolments. The next most studied language was Hebrew, with 1950 enrolments.

	No.	Number of Students at Each Year Level									
	of	Prep.		1		2		3		4	
Year	PS	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1988	21	45	58	61	81	68	68	35	157	104	214
1990	23	61	97	34	109	54	108	92	222	59	197
1991	33	54	176	64	159	75	232	172	268	179	321

	No.	Number of Students at Each Year Level				
	of	5		6		
Year	PS	M	F	M	F	Total
1988	21	122	368	240	419	2040
1990	23	192	374	188	536	2323
1991	33	275	494	353	602	3424

Table 25
Students studying French in Victorian Independent Schools - 1988, 1990, 1991
From AISV 1988:21, 1990:30, 1991:31

In 1990, (by which time total LOTE enrolments were 54.5% greater than in 1988), Hebrew had overtaken French as the LOTE with the most enrolments. However, in 1991, French again had the highest enrolments (and Japanese was now in second position, with 2561 students (17% of the total)). It was also the most available language, being taught in 33 primary schools (ahead of German, taught in 19) (Association of Independent Schools of Victoria Incorporated [AISV] 1991:4).[5]

French enrolments as a percentage of total LOTE enrolments in Victorian Independent primary schools - 1988, 1990 and 1991:

1988	26%
1990	19%
1991	23%

(From AISV 1988:21; 1990:30; 1991:31)

Western Australia

"In Western Australia in 1985, 270 primary schools (42%) of the total number of schools) offered a languages program, and 40 languages were taught" (Berthold 1991a:17).

In a survey of parental attitudes done in Western Australia in 1987, the response to the question 'Would you like your child to study a language other than English in primary school?' found 71.41% of parents in favour. This was an average percentage and the response varied from region to region. When asked what languages they preferred to be taught the responses were: Italian 18.7%, French 18.1% Japanese 14.7%, German 11.3%. All other languages received less than 6% (Jenkins, 1988) (Berthold 1991a:19).

Government System

The Ministry of Education of Western Australia was unable to supply data on primary LOTE students, but according to the DEET Survey of 1988, French students do exist, in quite large numbers.

Hrs/wk	Kind.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	All years
BOYS									
≤ 1 hr	-	-	2	2	1	10	506	551	1072
> 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	27	52	79
total	-	-	2	2	1	10	533	603	1151
GIRLS									
≤ 1 hr	-	-	1	1	1	12	477	571	1063
> 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	23	63	86
total	-	-	1	1	1	12	500	634	1149
ALL									
≤ 1 hr	-	-	3	3	2	22	983	1122	2135
> 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	115	165
total	-	-	3	3	2	22	1033	1237	2300

Table 26
Primary French students in WA Government Schools 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

French was the second most popular LOTE, with 29% of enrolments, behind Italian, which, with 3465 students, had 44% of primary LOTE enrolments.

Catholic System
In the Catholic system, the story has been one of decreasing enrolments.

Hrs/wk	Kind.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	All years
BOYS									
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	79	84
> 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	66	66
total	-	-	-	-	-	2	3	145	150
GIRLS									
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	28	32
> 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
total	-	-	-	-	-	3	1	28	32
ALL									
≤ 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	5	4	107	116
> 1 hr	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	66	66
total	-	-	-	-	-	5	4	173	182

Table 27
Primary French students in WA Catholic Schools 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

With only 1.9% of enrolments, French was the third most popular LOTE, but was far behind Italian (74% of primary LOTE enrolments) and Mandarin (18%).

	Year		Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		Year 4		Year 5	
Year	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1990	0	0	3	5	5	7	6	4	7	3	4	5
1991	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Year	Year 6		Year 7		Total	Total	Total
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M + F
1990	14	20	12	6	51	50	101
1991	0	0	5	9	5	9	14

Table 28
Students studying French in WA Catholic schools - 1990 and 1991
From Catholic Education Office, WA

Even though the actual number of students involved is quite small, the proportional decrease is dramatic, not to say catastrophic.

Independent System

Hrs/wk	Kind.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	All years
BOYS									
≤ 1 hr	5	62	83	49	27	22	19	118	385
> 1 hr	-	-	-	-	31	73	67	191	362
total	5	62	83	49	58	95	86	309	747
GIRLS									
≤ 1 hr	10	11	19	22	16	16	85	100	279
> 1 hr	-	-	-	-	1	9	36	169	215
total	10	11	19	22	17	25	121	269	494
ALL									
≤ 1 hr	15	73	102	71	43	38	104	218	664
> 1 hr	-	-	-	-	32	82	103	360	577
total	15	73	102	71	75	120	207	578	1241

Table 29
Primary French students in WA Independent Schools 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

French was by far the most studied LOTE, with 40% of enrolments.

For 1991, the only information we have been able to obtain on primary schools must be extracted from returns to the AISWA (Association of Independent Schools of Western Australia) from individual schools. Since the total from these returns does not match the grand total of primary and secondary enrolments supplied by the association, one must suppose that some returns are missing. Those received show 951 students in primary French.

Kind.	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Total
8	55	102	126	121	150	134	255	951

Table 30
French students in Western Australian Independent Schools - 1991
From AISWA

Summary
French is best represented as a proportion of the total primary LOTE enrolments in ACT government schools, and the highest numbers can be found in Victorian independent schools.

We can note the apparent frailty of French in the Catholic system, and this despite a tradition founded by the early arrival here of the French teaching order, the Marists.

We see that even in primary school, girls are more likely than boys to study French. This imbalance should not exist in the state system, but does in non-government schools, owing, one supposes, to the fact that French is offered in more girls' schools than boys' schools.

Of crucial importance for primary French, (and other LOTEs) is the question of time-tabling. Often French is placed outside the mainstream. Wales makes the following suggestion:

> It would be advisable, as long as language programs are seen as a specialist area, for schools to consider carefully the time-tabling implications of attempting to incorporate a number of such areas, in relation to main curriculum activities. Of course, the more a language program can be seen as an integral part of the main curriculum, for example when it is used as a medium for instruction in curriculum areas, the less likely it is to be viewed as taking time away from it. (1988:35)

This view is shared by a number of practising teachers. As can be seen from the above figures, a major problem is that many programs (in 1988 at least) only provided one hour or less of French per week. To increase the hours will of course be seen as taking away from the "core" materials of primary education, unless those topics can be covered in French. As Wales points out, the problem of the language being viewed as yet another demand on a crowded timetable does not arise when the language is used across the curriculum. This use is therefore strategically important to the status of the LOTE (in that it is not seen as marginal) as well as of benefit to the learning of the LOTE itself.

There is clear potential in the primary system for further growth in French. Given the strong presence of French in some primary systems, it must be advantaged in discussions of which language to adopt in new programs, especially when ease of resourcing is a key consideration. The question of continuity across primary and secondary systems will be discussed in a separate Section 2.2.4.

2.2.2 Secondary

According to the DEET survey of 1988, French was the LOTE with the most enrolments in the secondary system. There have been changes in secondary LOTE since that time, notably the rise to prominence of Japanese, but despite the story that this success has been - or has to be - achieved through the elimination of French, the latter continues to occupy a very important position in the secondary system.

The following is a survey of enrolments and trends in each state or territory, and the various systems within them.

ACT

The story of LOTEs in the ACT, as told by the annual ACT Foreign Language Survey of all schools, is one in which French plays a major role. We may see in this the influence of diplomatic families resident in Canberra. However, similar strength is found where this explanation cannot be given. While the summaries from 1989 and 1990 do not give a primary-secondary breakdown, the statistics nonetheless bear quotation:

> [1989:] French, German and Japanese are the principal foreign languages taught in ACT schools with 30.0%, 19.6% and 17.6% respectively of all foreign language enrolments. In the government sector French (33.1%) is the major language while others in strong demand are Japanese (17.2%), German (15.8%) and Indonesian (13.5%). The non-government sector has 4 major languages those being French (26.1%), German (24.3%), Italian (23.7%) and Japanese (18.2%).
>
> [1990:] ACT Foreign Language Survey shows that French, Japanese and German are the principal foreign languages taught in ACT schools with 27.7%, 23.1% and 16.4% respectively of all foreign language enrolments. In the public sector French (29.9%) is the major language followed by Japanese (22.4%), and Indonesian (15.4%). The non government sector has four major languages those being French (24.4%), Japanese (24%), Italian (23.6%) and German (19.8%).

Since, in the following discussion, we will be interested in the reputed dominance of French enrolments, and of LOTE enrolments, by female students, we also quote here the general male/female statistics from the ACT. We can ask: is it the case that LOTE students are predominantly female, thus producing a high female enrolment in French, or is it that French holds a particular attraction for female students, and that since French is such a widely taught language, LOTE students are therefore largely female? In 1988, in government schools, the gap between female and male enrolments in LOTE widened from 2% at the primary level (51% male to 49% female), through 10% at the junior secondary school (55% to 45%), to 36% at the college level (68% to 32%). In 1989, 56.5% of all LOTE enrolments were female. The language most dominated by females was not however, French, but Japanese (62.3% of enrolments), whereas the highest proportion of males studying any one language was 56.7% (for Indonesian). By 1990, the overall distribution of LOTE enrolments across the sexes seemed to be more even: "females account for 52.4% of all enrolments in foreign languages [...] 50.5% in secondary schools".

In the ACT, there is a school-based system, and therefore there is no prescribed syllabus. The school system does not have its own language adviser, but draws upon the services of French Embassy staff such as the Linguistic Attaché.

Government system

ACT policy-makers have followed the National Policy on Languages in designating those languages which are to be widely taught in schools.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male							
≤ 2 hrs	575	27	-	6	-	-	608
2-3 hrs	49	30	19	12	-	-	110
> 3 hrs	117	59	30	29	34	26	295
total	741	116	49	47	34	26	1013
Female							
≤ 2 hrs	507	47	-	10	-	-	564
2-3 hrs	47	43	23	25	-	-	138
> 3 hrs	120	79	81	70	101	82	533
total	674	169	104	105	101	82	1235
All							
≤ 2 hrs	1082	74	-	16	-	-	1172
2-3 hrs	96	73	42	37	-	-	248
> 3 hrs	237	138	111	99	135	108	828
total	1415	285	153	152	135	108	2248

Table 31
Secondary French students in ACT government schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Of the nine LOTEs listed, French was that most studied (38% of total LOTE enrolments), ahead of German, with 1502 enrolments (26% of the total). French accounted for 37% of male LOTE enrolments and 39% of female LOTE enrolments.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Total	% of LOTE enrolment
M	706	161	60	62	989	42%
F	684	317	140	137	1278	45%
Total	1390	478	200	199	2267	44%

Table 32
1988 French enrolments in ACT government high schools
From figures supplied by the ACT Department of Education and the Arts

At this lower level of high school, French was clearly dominant: the next most studied LOTE was German, with a total of 1372 enrolments (26% of the total).

Year	Gender	Years 7 - 10	Years 11 - 12	Total	% of LOTE enrolment
1983	M				
	F				
	Both	3109	263	3372	37%
1987	M				
	F				
	Both	2210	330	2540	41%
1988	M				
	F				
	Both	2267	299	2566	42%
1989	M	949	70	1019	33%
	F	1254	232	1486	36%
	Both	2203	302	2505	35%
1990	M	930	74	1004	33%
	F	1143	234	1377	34%
	Both	2073	308	2381	33%
1991	M	685	78	763	33%
	F	991	227	1218	38%
	Both	1676	305	1981	36%

Table 33
Secondary students of French in ACT government schools 1983 - 1991
From figures supplied by the ACT Department of Education and the Arts

In each of these years, 1983 and the period 1987-1991, French was the LOTE with the most enrolments. Total secondary LOTE enrolments have declined over the period. Thus although French numbers have dropped by 1392, French enrolments only decreased 1% as a proportion of the total. There is even a rise in the percentage of LOTE students held in French from 1990-1991, despite a decrease in numbers.

Catholic system

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male							
≤ 2 hrs	64	-	-	-	-	-	64
2-3 hrs	208	128	35	36	-	-	407
> 3 hrs	-	4	-	6	8	4	22
total	272	132	35	42	8	4	493
Female							
≤ 2 hrs	301	-	-	-	-	-	301
2-3 hrs	218	132	71	56	-	-	477
> 3 hrs	-	38	32	32	20	2	124
total	519	170	103	88	20	2	902
All							
≤ 2 hrs	365	-	-	-	-	-	365
2-3 hrs	426	260	106	92	-	-	884
> 3 hrs	-	42	32	38	28	6	146
total	791	302	138	130	28	6	1395

Table 34
Secondary French students in ACT Catholic schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Of the four LOTEs listed, French was that with most enrolments (41% of the total) ahead of Italian with 974 enrolments (29%). French accounted for 44% of male LOTE enrolments and 40% of female LOTE enrolments.

Year	Gender	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total
1988	M	247	153	57	46	9	6	518
	F	435	130	103	51	20	2	741
	Both	732	283	160	121	29	8	1333
1989	M	286	127	64	73	6	6	562
	F	315	86	90	71	12	11	585
	Both	651	213	154	144	18	17	1197
1990	M	175	82	40	58	4	6	365
	F	417	262	49	87	11	12	838
	Both	637	344	89	145	15	18	1248
1991	M	163	89	42	38	6	6	344
	F	385	279	59	54	15	10	802
	Both	548	368	101	92	21	16	1146

Table 35

French secondary students in Catholic schools in the ACT[6]
From material provided by the Catholic Education Office of the Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn

We note a slow decrease in French numbers from year to year. It should be remembered that the objectives of some of these courses may be quite modest: included in the statistics are students participating in one semester courses, and students in a school where the opportunity to study French for more than one year was apparently not available.

Independent system

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male							
≤ 2 hrs	57	-	-	-	-	-	57
2-3 hrs	28	116	86	72	-	-	302
> 3 hrs	220	-	-	8	9	9	246
total	305	116	86	80	9	9	605
Female							
≤ 2 hrs	205	-	-	-	-	-	205
2-3 hrs	-	66	64	45	7	-	182
> 3 hrs	-	-	-	17	29	15	61
total	205	66	64	62	36	15	448
All							
≤ 2 hrs	262	-	-	-	-	-	262
2-3 hrs	28	182	150	117	7	-	484
> 3 hrs	220	-	-	25	38	24	307
total	510	182	150	142	45	24	1053

Table 36

Secondary French students in ACT Independent schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Of the seven LOTEs listed, French had the second greatest number of enrolments, 1053, (and 32% of the total), just behind German (1055 enrolments) and ahead of Japanese (434 enrolments). French accounted for 33% of male LOTE enrolments and 30% of female LOTE enrolments.

Approximate figures for subsequent years can be obtained by the subtraction of figures received from the Catholic Education Office from those for non-government schools supplied by the Department of Education and the Arts. Obviously there will be some inexactness, since the two surveys, by the church and state authorities most likely did not take place at the same point of the year. Furthermore, it is to be remembered that the number of Catholic students of French is slightly underestimated, since students at one college where French is taught were only identified as LOTE students.

Year	Years 7-10	Years 11-12	Total
1989	972	64	1036
1990	866	78	944
1991	790	61	851

Table 37

Secondary students of French in ACT Independent schools 1983 - 1991
From figures supplied by the ACT Department of Education and the Arts, and the Catholic Education Office

New South Wales

Government system

Over the last ten years, while the number of LOTEs taught has increased, there has been a decrease in student demand for LOTEs, and in provision for them. The proportion of school staff involved in language teaching has also decreased. Availability of LOTEs has become a problem: in 1991 almost 33% of secondary schools did not provide any LOTE, and in others, LOTEs were not available in the senior school. In this climate it is understandable that even a teacher of French whose personal career was adversely affected by policy in the Hunter region could say that the regional situation had had the merit of putting LOTEs on to the public's agenda. From being a non-issue, LOTEs suddenly became something worth fighting for.

Changes may be on the way, as the government is attempting to address the problem: by 1996 junior secondary students are to study a priority LOTE for 100 hours, and Language High Schools have been set up. Provision of languages is to be managed by clusters in regions. The twelve priority languages are: Arabic, French, German, Greek (Modern), Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese. Of these, six are to be afforded particular support, because of previous lack of representation, and their emerging economic importance: they are Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Russian and Spanish. Because of its previous strength, and/or perceived irrelevance to economic concerns, French does not feature here.

Year	Sex	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
1988	M	4467	2121	1004	1037	698	347	9674
	F	3878	3198	2217	2497	1622	1530	14942
	All	8345	5319	3221	3534	2320	1877	24616
1989	M	3990	1919	856	908	398	376	8447
	F	3572	3278	2151	2095	1440	1370	13906
	All	7562	5197	3007	3003	1838	1746	22353
1990	M	2621	1758	796	800	325	235	6535
	F	2786	2530	1807	1940	1202	1055	11320
	All	5407	4288	2603	2740	1527	1290	17855

Table 38
Secondary French students in Government schools in NSW - 1988-1990
From DEET Survey 1988, and figures from Ministry of Education

In 1988, 41% of LOTE enrolments were in French. French accounted for 39% of male LOTE enrolments and 41% of female LOTE enrolments. Similar percentages for later years are more difficult to calculate, but it seems that French is still one of the major LOTEs, despite a decrease in numbers. In 1990, it was the most studied LOTE at each year level in the regular school program. (French is not offered through the ethnic schools program, or the Saturday school of community languages.)

The NSW Senior French syllabus allows different levels of study/specialization, from 2 Unit Z, which is for those beginning at Year 11, to 3 Unit, which is the most advanced. Assessment (as seen in the HSC papers for 1991) is organized around the four macro-skills: separate papers test reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. Examples of the kind of tasks used in the examination procedures are given below.

Reading: questions in English are asked on passages in French, some of which are reproductions from magazines, transcriptions of interviews.

Writing: students are asked to write letters, postcards, and, rather surprisingly, dialogues. The dialogue question, which appears more than once, is not about scripting dialogue for a play, but calls for one to write down the conversation one would have in a given situation: "A friend calls to tell you that..."

Listening: questions are based on texts such as announcements or short interviews.

Speaking: student productions are recorded: one-sided conversations with hotel receptionists (the student plays the hotel guest, no-one plays the receptionist). 3 Unit candidates are asked for 3 minute presentations of arguments.

From the type of examination question used, we can see the communicative philosophy which undoubtedly is supposed to reign in classroom practice, although it is modified by the examination, particularly the external examination situation. (The recording of one-sided conversations is hardly a communicative task.)

In addition to what might be termed these language skills, 2 Unit, 2 Unit General and 3 Unit candidates study various options. These are described by Chamberlain (1991:111) thus:

Traditionally, the NSW HSC French syllabus consisted of studies in language and literature. During the 1970s several other "options" were added to give students an alternative to the study of literature. The options were:

- "film": the study of a film, its scenario and its cinematographic features
- "la chanson française": the study of around 15 French songs, their texts and the relationship between the text and the music. The songs were generally by "auteurs-compositeurs" and they were studied in the same way that poetry is studied - theme, images, use of language, structure - with the addition of the musical element.
- the "magazine option": the study of a monthly magazine for advanced learners of French. The magazine chosen was *Passepartout*, published by Hachette. Students were examined on the language and cultural content of the issues of the magazine set for study, generally most of those for the current year.

The last option was not available after 1986. A comparatively recent development in senior French has been the introduction of its replacement, a "French for Commercial Purposes" option. "This step was taken, not just to provide another option, but because many people felt that, given the spirit of the times, an option aimed specifically at the professional world would be appropriate" (Chamberlain 1991:111). When first examined, in 1990, this option attracted 80 candidates, a number which had increased greatly by the following November when 200 pupils were assessed. A description of the course is given in Chamberlain 1991, where it is suggested that perhaps a French for the Hospitality Industry option may not be too far away. The 2/3 Unit options paper for 1991 has questions on an extract from a film, from a novel, on two songs, and various "commercial documents".

Two Language Advisers share the responsibility for primary and secondary French.

Catholic system

There is something of a Catholic French tradition in NSW, going back to the establishment of the Marists in the last century.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male							
≤ 2 hrs	361	219	23	21	-	-	624
2-3 hrs	141	136	16	7	7	2	309
> 3 hrs	59	55	31	40	70	45	300
total	561	410	70	68	77	47	1233
Female							
≤ 2 hrs	690	154	137	31	-	-	1012
2-3 hrs	604	396	160	146	-	-	1306
> 3 hrs	222	240	86	79	126	74	827
total	1516	790	383	256	126	74	3145
All							
≤ 2 hrs	1051	373	160	52	-	-	1636
2-3 hrs	745	532	176	153	7	2	1615
> 3 hrs	281	295	117	119	196	119	1127
total	2077	1200	453	324	203	121	4378

Table 39
Secondary French students in Catholic schools in the archdiocese of Sydney - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

French was one of ten LOTEs offered, and was that most studied, with 43% of enrolments, ahead of Italian with 41%. French accounted for 42% of male LOTE enrolments and 44% of female LOTE enrolments. According to the Catholic Education Office in Sydney, in 1991 there were only 102 Year 11 students in systemic Catholic schools in the archdiocese of Sydney studying French.

Gender	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total	% LOTE enrol.
Male	517	486	29	65	28	23	1148	34%
Female	1238	528	133	123	74	62	2158	30%
Both	1755	1014	162	188	102	85	3306	32%

Table 40
Secondary students of French in Catholic systemic schools in the Archdiocese of Sydney - 1991
From information supplied by the Catholic Education Office, Sydney

Independent system

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
All	3668	2274	1379	1365	477	377	9540

Table 41
Secondary French students in Independent schools in NSW - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Of the fourteen LOTEs listed in the survey, French had the highest enrolments, with 45% of the total, ahead of German with 4163 (20%) of LOTE enrolments.

Northern Territory

Government system

French does not feature amongst the priority languages supported by the NT Government. As of 1991 the NT Board of Studies had not approved a syllabus at the junior secondary level. All Year 12 courses in the NT are the same as those in SA.

The Year 11 syllabus for the NT bears many similarities to that of Queensland, influenced as they both are by the work of David Ingram. The reader is directed to the section on the Queensland syllabus for a description, since it is believed that the Queensland version preceded that of the NT. An important difference between the Qld and NT courses is the latter's use of ASLPR levels to describe entrance and exit levels.

Hrs/wk	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male						
≤ 2 hrs	-	-	-	-	-	0
2-3 hrs	26	13	-	-	-	39
> 3 hrs	33	47	13	5	-	98
total	59	60	13	5	-	137
Female						
≤ 2 hrs	-	-	-	-	-	0
2-3 hrs	45	20	3	-	-	68
> 3 hrs	26	44	35	6	6	117
total	71	64	38	6	6	185
All						
≤ 2 hrs	-	-	-	-	-	0
2-3 hrs	71	33	3	-	-	107
> 3 hrs	59	91	48	11	6	215
total	130	124	51	11	6	322

Table 42
Secondary students of French in NT government schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

The French share of LOTE enrolments is much smaller here than those we have already seen. Of the eleven LOTEs listed, French was that with the third largest number of enrolments, behind Indonesian (899 enrolments) and German (333 enrolments). French accounted for 15% of total LOTE enrolments, 14% of male LOTE enrolments and 17% of female enrolments. However, the totals supplied by the NT Department of Education do not match up with those of the DEET Survey for 1988, not even with respect to the languages taught. It is remarkable that the language with the third largest enrolments should not be one of the eight priority languages in the territory. This is surely the only state where that is so.

Year	Sex	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total	% of LOTE enrol.
1988	M							
	F							
	Both						603	23%
1989	M							
	F							
	Both						336	16%
1990	M							
	F							
	Both						176	6.1%
1991	M	27	18	20	119	6	190	13%
	F	21	22	40	141	4	228	14%
	Both	48	40	60	260	10	418	14%[7]

Table 43
Secondary students of French in government schools of the NT 1988-1991
From figures supplied by the NT Department of Education

The decline in French enrolments was reversed in 1991. Figures for this year, which provide a year-level breakdown, show the largest enrolments to be in Year 11: this must be due to beginners' courses in the senior school.

Catholic system

Hrs/wk	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male						
≤ 2 hrs	-	-	-	-	-	0
2-3 hrs	37	19	-	-	-	56
> 3 hrs	-	-	3	-	2	5
total	37	19	3	-	2	61
Female						
≤ 2 hrs	-	-	-	-	-	0
2-3 hrs	39	29	-	-	-	68
> 3 hrs	-	-	7	2	4	13
total	39	29	7	2	4	81
All						
≤ 2 hrs	-	-	-	-	-	0
2-3 hrs	76	48	-	-	-	124
> 3 hrs	-	-	10	2	6	18
total	76	48	10	2	6	142

Table 44
Secondary students of French in NT Catholic schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Of the seven LOTEs listed, French had the second-largest number of enrolments (and 20% of the LOTE total), behind Indonesian (217 enrolments, and 30% of the total). French accounted for 17% of male LOTE enrolments and 22% of female enrolments.

The figures supplied to the NLLIA by the Catholic Education Centre of the Northern Territory are incomplete, since not all schools complied with the

request for information. Data to hand show secondary French in one school (of the three responding):

	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total
M	14	14	4	0	0	32
F	17	17	10	3	1	48
Both	31	31	14	3	1	80

Table 45
Secondary students of French at St. John's College, NT - 1991

Independent system
Since the Independent Schools of the Northern Territory have no co-ordinating organization, no details of these schools have been available.

Queensland

Government system
The inclusion of French amongst the priority languages in Queensland seems to have depended in part on its past strong presence in the secondary system: "The Queensland Government has given, and will continue to give first priority to five languages: Chinese, French, German, Indonesian and Japanese. The two European languages, French and German, have priority because they are well established in our schools, there is continuing demand for them and they are languages of international importance" (Braddy 1991:7-8).

Hrs/wk	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male						
≤ 2 hrs	2115	18	-	12	-	2145
2-3 hrs	3087	414	302	2	1	3806
> 3 hrs	108	29	92	76	86	391
total	5310	461	394	90	87	6342
Female						
≤ 2 hrs	1965	12	-	12	26	2015
2-3 hrs	3106	818	744	2	44	4714
> 3 hrs	139	62	182	345	322	1050
total	5210	892	926	359	392	7779
All						
≤ 2 hrs	4080	30	-	24	26	4160
2-3 hrs	6193	1232	1046	4	45	8520
> 3 hrs	247	91	274	421	408	1441
total	10520	1353	1320	449	479	14121

Table 46
Secondary students of French in Queensland government schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Of the seven LOTEs listed, French was the most studied, approximately 2000 enrolments ahead of German. French had 39% of the total, and German 33%. French accounted for 38% of male LOTE enrolments, and 39% of female enrolments. The dominance of the two traditional European languages obviously meant that great changes had to take place if these two were to be contained in 50% on one side of the European-Asian balance. Balance could be achieved either through growth in overall LOTE numbers or a decrease in French and German numbers. The following table shows that it was the

latter. In correspondence, a member of the Languages and Cultures Unit makes the following comment on dropping French numbers: "The falling trend is more significant amongst State School students due in part to the balance being established between European and Asian languages."

The figures below are those supplied by the Department of Education: they do not agree exactly with those of the DEET Survey of 1988 with respect to girls in senior.

Year	Sex	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total
1988	M	5310	461	394	90	87	6342
	F	5210	892	926	393	392	7813
	All	10520	1353	1320	483	479	14155
1989	M	4627	439	367	91	91	5615
	F	4667	897	778	331	365	7038
	All	9294	1336	1145	422	456	12653
1990	M	3846	370	334	74	86	4710
	F	3877	911	735	220	280	6023
	All	7723	1281	1069	294	366	10733
1991	M	3705	270	292	71	77	4415
	F	3655	701	695	229	241	5521
	All	7360	971	987	300	318	9936
1992	M						
	F						
	All			808	296	317	

Table 47
Secondary French enrolments in Queensland secondary schools 1988-1992
From figures supplied by the Queensland Department of Education

In 1991, of the 38000 secondary LOTE students in Queensland, 34% studied Japanese, 30% German and 26% French (Braddy 1991:3). In February of that year, there were 189 teachers of French in secondary schools and this was the largest number of teachers for any one language. Japanese teachers were obviously in short supply: although Japanese had more students than French, it had fewer teachers, 176 (the second largest group).

In the last decade, secondary education in Queensland has undergone reform with the introduction of a new system of assessment, ROSBA. New syllabi were developed, all with a common format, with the exception of those for languages. While all other syllabi are organized around content-process-skills, the LOTE syllabi are developed in terms of functions, language items, learning experiences (listening, speaking, reading, writing), based on a communicative-functional approach. ROSBA was in place throughout Queensland in 1985. Syllabi were subsequently reviewed, and so the senior syllabi now used date from 1987. The French syllabus was written by practising teachers, in their limited spare time, with some advice from the Languages and Cultures Unit. Regrettably, the teachers were not remunerated. According to LACU, the syllabus is solid, given these conditions of its production.

The aims of the junior course are:

a to enable students to gain a practical knowledge of French so that they are able to understand and use it with the degree of proficiency indicated in the Guide to Assessment;

b to enable students to appreciate, through the study of French, the thought, manners, customs and achievements of the French-speaking people, their way of life and culture. In turn, this should lead to a better understanding of the student's own culture and, furthermore, a different world view as ignorance and understanding are broken down. (Queensland Board of Secondary School Studies [QBSSS] 1988:3)

The aims of the senior syllabus are expressed in almost the same words (QBSSS 1987:2).

In accordance with the new orthodoxy of the communicative functional approach, the French course is organised around thematic units.[8] Under "Course Components", the junior syllabus states:

Language learning involves the following components:
- topics which will be dealt with, and their related settings
- settings in which the students will operate
- functions which the learner will fulfil
- grammar/vocabulary which the learner will be able to use
- macro-skills with which the learner will be able to communicate

The Senior course components highlight the same concepts: topics, vocabulary, setting, function, grammar and macroskills (QBSSS 1987:2).

A variety of units is proposed: while certain of these are obligatory, teachers make a selection amongst others. For example, 14 units or themes are suggested for the Junior course, and most teachers would pick twelve. Themes include: housing, transport, health, entertainment. Senior students treat similar themes, with new vocabulary and functions. The range of topics is extended and includes: Social Issues, Future Plans, Growing Up. Students at this level should be able to respond to abstract notions. With Senior students, it is recommended that only two units be treated in a semester. "Alternatively, it may suit school resources and requirements to replace a theme [...] with a specialised unit of work based on any of the following: Cinema-Film; Radio and Television; Magazines and Newspapers; Songs; Poetry, Prose; Commercial/Technical Language; Catering and Hospitality" (QBSSS 1987:3). Later in the syllabus it is suggested that "consideration should be given to the development of specialised units which would enable students to develop further the four macroskills through a critical evaluation of specific aspects of French/Francophone culture" and the above suggestions are again listed (QBSSS 1987:16).

For each theme, teachers decide which "learning experiences" (listening, reading, writing, speaking) are appropriate; choose a relevant setting or cultural context (thus language and culture are in principle taught simultaneously); select which grammatical aspects will be used; which functions are relevant; which "language items" (e.g. conversation, letter, novel, telegram) are possible. The syllabi list functions which should have been covered by the end of the junior and senior courses (QBSSS 1987:5;

1988:6): the function lists are the same for both levels. Outlines of the minimum requirements in grammar are also provided (QBSSS 1987:8; 1988:8). As long as such lists continue to be promulgated, there is a need for teacher trainees to be acquiring some knowledge of traditional grammatical categories. Objectives are also stated in terms of achievements in each of the four macro-skills. These objectives are often presented as tasks, such as the reading of a timetable or the writing of a personal letter.

The Year 9-10 program should include at least 150 hours of class contact (including assessment). A minimum of 75 hours is required in Year 10. A Senior course requires at least 55 hours per semester (a total of 220 hours), which seems to indicate about three hours of classes per week.

Assessment should take place through students performing "communication tasks", such as reading advertisements and selecting one product to fulfil a particular need, or participating in a role play (QBSSS 1988:25). A single communication task could be used to assess more than one macro-skill, or the teacher might decide to use separate communication tasks to focus on each skill. Each skill should be weighted equally when assessing. Descriptions of levels of achievement which could be obtained by students in these skills, and descriptors (Very High Achievement - Very Low Achievement) are given (QBSSS 1987:22[9];1988:34). A final grade is based on continuous, and final, assessment.

No textbooks are prescribed and none is even suggested in the junior syllabus. According to a spokesperson from LACU, when the new syllabus was introduced, there was really only suitable book available for senior, *Le Monde des jeunes*, which covered most of the themes.[10] The junior equivalent was *Nos amis*. These have lost favour for several reasons: they were American, they included grammatical drills, and the French "was not real French but Canadian". This was not the only time we met with the rejection of Canadian French by Queensland educators. For some reason (Britain's proximity to France?) the American texts have generally been replaced by British ones: *Action*, *Eclair*, *Tour de France*. Teachers are also using the Victorian production *Ça bouge*. The only problem with this method is that "it is out of context", according to a LACU staff member[11]. In Senior the trend is to work with "realia", particularly for reading comprehension: this can be seen in the examination papers, where reading passages are reproductions of magazine articles, train tickets, theatre programs. In practice, in class, readers are used, collections of texts, such as *Vécus*, *Orientation[s]*, and a collection of articles from *L'Express*.[12]

One of the advantages of school-based assessment such as the scheme in force in Queensland is that the examined tasks may be "more communicative" than is possible in other systems where all students sit a centrally devised and marked test. The Queensland external papers for 1990 and 1991[13] show how "communicative tasks" are mediated by the examination genre: we have referred to the use of train tickets and other "authentic documents" which are alas out of a communicative context, but do lend themselves to simulations. An endearingly ingenious example of trying to re-present old tests in communicative costume is found in the 1990 paper, where a cloze test is contextualized thus:

> A careless typist has spattered a whole article with white out. Read the article carefully and using the suggestions given in brackets please supply the missing words so that the typist can repair the damage before his boss sees it.

The malignant ghost of a grammarian has obviously guided the trajectory of the white out, which has landed on prepositions, pronouns, articles, and verbs where the options offered to the students are not semantic, but between indicatives and subjunctives. This section, "Grammar" did not appear on the paper of 1991.

Although much of the government effort has gone into the 6-8 LOTE initiative, one of the features of French in the state secondary system has been the establishment of immersion programs. While they began as local initiatives, they have met with such success that the model has been taken up by the government, as well as in the independent system (Braddy alludes to their success in his statement (1991:6)). We will discuss these immersion programs in Section 2.2.3.

There is a LOTE officer responsible for French, but also for two other languages, and there is an advisory language teacher for French, involved in visiting schools and preparing materials. At the moment she is working on a videotape of French songs, which is to have accompanying worksheets.

The major future development in secondary education will be the follow-through from the new primary programs, with Year 8 becoming the third year of such a program, rather than a year in which various languages are sampled. Such year-long Year 8 LOTE courses are expected to be introduced by 1993. Efforts must therefore be made to co-ordinate with local primary schools. At the same time, students who have moved from another area must be given the opportunity to take up a language at this stage. In a memorandum of the 10/3/92, to the principals of schools in the Metropolitan East Region, the Assistant Executive Director wrote of the implications of the change in Year 8:

- the need for year-long continuing as well as beginning courses at year eight
- staffing requirements these changes might incur
- language offerings and choices

Here, as in other states and territories moving to a cluster model, new demands will be made upon secondary teachers and timetabling as secondary teachers provide languages to primary schools in their clusters. However, in time there should be more specialist primary teachers.

As the new primary LOTE programs become established, it is to be expected that senior enrolments will increase: Braddy (1991:4) states "We aim that at least 20 per cent of Year 12 students will have studied [presumably 'will be studying'] a LOTE by [2000]". Obviously with both higher standards, and different language levels in senior, assessment models will have to be rethought.

Catholic system

Hrs/wk	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male	910	196	203	43	32	1384
Female	1471	456	318	164	32	2441
All	2381	652	521	207	64	3825

Table 48
Secondary students of French in Catholic schools in the archdiocese of Brisbane - 1988
From DEET survey 1988

Five LOTEs are listed as offered in 1988: French, with 38% of the total, was the most studied LOTE, ahead of Japanese, with 27%. French enrolments accounted for 37% of male LOTE enrolments and 38% of female LOTE enrolments. These figures do not agree with those supplied by the Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC), and which are reproduced below. These also show French to be the most studied, (42% of the total; 43% of male enrolments, 41% of female enrolments).

Gender	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total	% LOTE enrol.
Male	697	161	141	25	24	1048	43%
Female	1085	357	219	142	112	1915	41%
Both	1782	518	360	167	136	2963	42%

Table 49
Secondary students of French in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of Brisbane - 1988
From figures supplied by the QCEC

In the table below, the figures for 1992 are based on a printout from the QBSSS, showing enrolments for French, dated 1st April, 1992. The schools are listed by name, and have been counted according to whether State, Catholic or "other", not according to their membership of the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland, to which some Catholic schools belong.

Year	Gender	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total	% LOTE enrol.
1989	M	980	131	166	44	39	1360	32%
	F	1534	363	416	108	140	2561	35%
	Both	2514	494	582	152	179	3921	34%
1990	M	988	137	117	33	30	1305	26%
	F	1218	313	328	163	104	2126	31%
	Both	2206	450	445	196	134	3431	29%
1991	M	823	131	88	26	26	1094	24%
	F	1378	322	312	180	146	2338[14]	30%
	Both	2201	453	400	206	172	3432	28%
1992	M							
	F							
	Both			383	163	124		

Table 50
Secondary French students in Queensland Catholic schools - 1989-1992
From QCEC and QBSSS

In each of the years 1989-1991, French was the second-most studied LOTE, after Japanese. It may be noted that the gap between the male and female percentages is widening.

Independent system

Hrs/wk	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male						
≤ 2 hrs	127	-	-	-	-	127
2-3 hrs	492	109	107	6	3	717
> 3 hrs	60	127	125	55	42	409
total	679	236	232	61	45	1253
Female						
≤ 2 hrs	554	26	13	5	7	605
2-3 hrs	467	308	232	3	6	1016
> 3 hrs	-	-	55	123	139	317
total	1021	334	300	131	152	1938
All						
≤ 2 hrs	681	26	13	5	7	732
2-3 hrs	959	417	339	9	9	1733
> 3 hrs	60	127	180	178	181	726
total	1700	570	532	192	197	3191

Table 51
Secondary students of French in Queensland Independent schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

In the table below, the figures used for 1989 and 1990 are those obtained in surveys administered, by the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland to its members, and all non-member, non-government, non-Catholic schools. Some Catholic schools are members of the association. The figures for 1991 and 1992 are based on printouts from the Board of Secondary School Studies, showing enrolments for French, dated 9th April, 1991 and 1st April, 1992. The schools are listed by name, and have been counted according to whether they were State, Catholic or "other", not according to their membership of the AISQ.

LOTE enrolments in Queensland Independent schools have increased greatly over the period surveyed: a comparison of figures from the DEET Survey of 1988 and from the 1990 report of the AISQ, shows an increase of over 10000 in total LOTE enrolments.

According to the DEET Survey of 1988, of the six LOTEs listed, French was the most studied in that year, with 36% of LOTE enrolments, ahead of German, with 28% (Japanese was a close third, with 25%). By the AISQ survey of 1989, Japanese had overtaken French as the most studied LOTE, and now had 6097 enrolments and 34% of the total. In 1990, Japanese had almost 8000 enrolments, and 40%. So in this particular system, the "overthrow" of French has been played out by its being dethroned in favour of another dominant language. Yet at the same time, French numbers have increased. For French, the numerical growth of 1989-1990 would seem to have happened in existing programs, rather than through the extension of French into schools where it was not previously present. However, in 1991, five schools intended to introduce French.

Year	No. of schools	Sex	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years	% of LOTE enrol.
1988		M	679	236	232	61	45	1253	32%
		F	1021	334	300	131	152	1938	39%
	35	Both	1700	570	532	192	197	3191	36%
1989		M	1070	342	312	69	70	1863	26%
		F	1942	585	635	214	238	3614	33%
	40	Both	3012	927	947	283	308	5477	31%
1990		M	1492	372	368	92	72	2396	29%
		F	1906	650	606	250	204	3616	31%
	41	Both	3398	1022	974	342	276	6012	30%
1991		M							
		F							
		Both				245	243		
1992		M							
		F							
		Both			764	195	248		

Table 52
Secondary French students in Queensland Independent schools - 1988, 1989 and 1990
From DEET Survey 1988, AISQ reports 1989:21, 1990:21, printouts from the Board of Secondary School Studies

Significantly, four of these five schools did not offer a LOTE in 1990, and so had chosen French as the language, or as one of the languages with which to start up LOTE programs. This is can be seen as indicative of the apparent availability of staff and resources in French.

South Australia

Government system

The policy of the Education Department is that all students be able to study a LOTE by 1995. This involves the expansion of languages into more schools, as well as the offering of more languages by schools which already have LOTE programs. (For example, in a policy statement from the Northern area, it is stated that a secondary school with more than 900 enrolments has the capacity to offer three LOTEs.) Provision of languages is organized on a regional level, working with a cluster model. LOTE teaching is based on the ALL guidelines, and in 1992, a workshop, with language-specific sessions, was held during which these were explained to beginning LOTE teachers.

Fourteen LOTEs are listed. French had the second greatest number of enrolments, and 30% of the total, behind German, with 8150 students (37% of the total). French accounted for 29% of male LOTE enrolments and 31% of female enrolments. For both males and females, French was the second-most studied language (behind German).

Hrs/wk	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male						
≤ 2 hrs	225	4	-	-	1	230
2-3 hrs	841	265	73	5	1	1185
> 3 hrs	482	437	249	145	58	1371
total	1548	706	322	150	60	2786
Female						
≤ 2 hrs	180	6	-	-	-	186
2-3 hrs	841	265	138	35	5	1284
> 3 hrs	547	760	459	299	232	2297
total	1568	1031	597	334	237	3767
All						
≤ 2 hrs	405	10	-	-	1	416
2-3 hrs	1682	530	211	40	6	2469
> 3 hrs	1029	1197	708	444	290	3668
total	3116	1737	919	484	297	6553

Table 53
Secondary students of French in South Australian Government schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Year	Year 12 students	Total Secondary French Students
1987	258	7454
1988	297	7028
1989	247	6312
1990	210	6065

Table 54
French students in SA government secondary schools
From figures supplied by the Languages and Multicultural Centre

As was stated in the section on primary French in South Australia, that sector seems to be the one in which growth in French may be expected. We alluded to 1990 plans for the administration of LOTE education in various districts of South Australia, and saw that while new primary programs were recommended, we only had evidence of the setting up of one new secondary program, while others were being phased out. Secondary French programs as they stood were obviously considered quite ample, and indeed in some cases superfluous, although in a list of considerations informing the elaboration of the LOTE plan of the Northern Area, it is stated that existing programs should be maintained, and that continuity of LOTE study is important. In the Northern Area, French was available at the secondary level in 12 schools in 1990 and it was recommended that one of these programs be phased out. This meant that French was the second most available language: German was offered in 16 schools and had almost 700 more students. In the Adelaide area, in 1990, French was taught in 13 secondary schools, (again second to German) and three of these programs were to be terminated. In the Southern Area, the draft plan of 1990, which is based on a consideration of continuity from primary to secondary, included a recommendation for the introduction of French to one high school. Three and possibly four of the existing 14 programs were to be dropped.

While policy is to introduce more Asian languages without affecting European languages (read French and German), in practice French numbers are suffering, although stories of French as the sacrificial victim offered to the new gods of Asian languages are exaggerated. In table 55 below, a loss of 1389 students in three years is shown. If we say that there would have been 30 French students per class (a generous estimate), this represents a reduction of 46 classes: it is little wonder that morale is a problem amongst French teachers in SA. Indeed, such was the gloom of some to whom we spoke that doubts were even expressed as to the future of French in the SA secondary system. Such despair is probably not necessary and is certainly not useful, but it must be admitted that the statistics do not tell the whole story of the running down of French. It is also one of teachers feeling that they and their subject, through various administrative and organisational measures, are being pushed further towards the margins of school life. There is a feeling that for a LOTE to be supported, it needs a community base, and that this has not been noticeable/noticed enough in the case of French to suggest the viability of French programs. LOTEs are certainly not part of the secondary academic mainstream, often being taught in NIT (non-instructional time). Timetabling is certainly an issue elsewhere: in Queensland for example, we met teachers in various schools working outside regular school hours so that students could continue their LOTE studies. These are the enthusiasts. When LOTE instruction is pushed into NIT time, less enthusiastic students, sensing this subject is of low value, behave accordingly. As in Tasmania, mixed classes are created in order to ensure the provision of LOTE, the official ruling being that a class of less than 15 students is not viable.

Many language teachers do not have their own classrooms: discontent about this is not so much based on the concomitant lack of prestige, but on the attendant pedagogical inefficacity. It has long been recommended in LOTE teaching circles that the classroom be a kind of linguistic and cultural bath, with displays of posters and other artifacts.

The vitality of a language program depends in great part on the individuals teaching it. It is regrettable that SA policy insists on the transfer of teachers after 10 years of service in one school. In practice this can mean the end of a LOTE.

In addition to the perceived internal disregard for French, teachers are concerned about public perceptions of the language. It is bad publicity that the only school offering an International Baccalaureate is planning to drop French in 1993.

The rather serious failure of morale amongst French teachers that we have recorded may only be one side of a more complex picture. Elsewhere in the country, South Australia is considered something of a flagship for LOTE policy at both primary and secondary levels. Teaching materials are highly developed, and administrative infrastructure is impressive. No doubt here, as elsewhere, devolution of administrative responsibility to the regional level must result in some inconsistencies in the pattern of implementation of policy and some real local difficulties must have given rise to stories whose dramatic significance may be rather less, in the context of the general picture, than as the structure of a personal experience. It seems, too, that the mere rumour of a "LOTE map" and its contents (never adopted as an official policy instrument) wrought some havoc amongst the teachers, whose fears

concerning its effect on French have yet to be allayed. This rumoured map may also have precipitated some decisions at local levels. This may be one case where low morale is as much a factor in the problem as a response to it.

The South Australian French Teachers' Association has about 60 members, and is working well. Nevertheless, some members complain of feeling isolated from each other: it is now unlikely that there will be many teachers of French in any one region. Hub groups, run by the French advisers, have been active in the state for many years and there is plenty of evidence of energetic and creative work in French teaching in this state.

There has been a French adviser since 1979, and today both the secondary and primary advisers work in the Languages and Multicultural Centre.

Catholic system

Hrs/wk	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male						
≤ 2 hrs	58	40	25	12	7	142
2-3 hrs	47	46	7	-	-	100
> 3 hrs	42	34	12	9	1	98
total	147	120	44	21	8	340
Female						
≤ 2 hrs	56	36	25	6	9	132
2-3 hrs	243	127	57	10	10	447
> 3 hrs	183	195	139	92	69	678
total	482	358	221	108	88	1257
All						
≤ 2 hrs	114	76	50	18	16	274
2-3 hrs	290	173	64	10	10	547
> 3 hrs	225	229	151	101	70	776
total	629	478	265	129	96	1597

Table 55
Secondary students of French in South Australian Catholic schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Fifteen LOTEs are listed: French, with 25% of LOTE enrolments, was second to Italian (60%). Male: 13% of male enrolments, second to Italian. Female: 33% of female enrolments, second to Italian.

Gender	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total	% LOTE enrol
M	251	210	61	24	20	566	15%
F	579	396	165	115	81	1336	37%
Both	830	606	226	139	101	1902	27%

Table 56
Secondary students of French in South Australian Catholic schools - 1991
From SACEO

Seven LOTEs were studied. French was the second-most popular, but was well behind Italian (4697 enrolments).

Independent system

Although the DEET Survey of 1988 does not record that French was taught in Independent secondary schools in SA in that year, data from the South Australian Independent Schools Board (SAISB) show that it was.

Year	No. of schools	Gender	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total	% LOTE enrol.
1988	16	M	396	266	176	60	21	919	41%
		F	508	423	279	87	71	1368	55%
		Both	904	689	455	147	92	2287	48%
1989	14	M	337	208	155	30	25	755	38%
		F	344	275	240	98	57	1014	38%
		Both	681	483	395	128	82	1769	38%
1990	13	M	291	250	185	48	26	800	34%
		F	357	257	190	104	71	979	42%
		Both	648	507	375	152	97	1779	38%
1991	17	M	272	224	173	63	33	765	28%
		F	427	382	260	103	74	1246	36%
		Both	699	606	433	166	107	2011	33%

Table 57
Secondary French students in SA Independent Schools - 1988-1991
From SAISB

Over the four years surveyed, the position of most-studied LOTE was held year about by French and German. The lowest numbers in French were in 1989: we have already seen that this was a "bad" year for French in SA Independent primary schools.

Tasmania

Government system

The organization of Tasmanian secondary education differs from the system in some other states, in that Years 11 and 12 are taught in separate institutions, senior colleges. Furthermore, the HSC is a two year course, students being able to use subjects from both years for matriculation. Therefore, the Department of Education and the Arts has not asked colleges to supply separate statistics for Years 11 and 12. It is possible to take up the study of a LOTE at the senior college level, if interest permits the formation of a class. Although in the data presented, students in Years 9 and 10 are counted separately, in practice students at these levels are often combined to keep up LOTE class sizes.

Year	Total Sec. enrolments	% + OR -	French enrolments	% + OR -	French% all enrolments	French% Mod. Lang. enrolments
1976	30177		6537		21.66	68.64
1977	29646	-1.76	6703	2.54	22.61	68.22
1978	29432	-0.72	6230	-7.06	21.17	66.45
1979	28900	-1.81	6006	-3.60	20.78	65.72
1980	27852	-3.63	5933	-1.22	21.30	66.89
1981	27361	-1.76	5702	-3.89	20.84	64.74
1982	27152	-0.76	5763	1.07	21.22	63.06
1983	28509	5.00	4967	-13.81	17.42	56.03
1984	29173	2.33	4848	-2.40	16.62	56.64
1985	29563	1.34	4393	-9.39	14.86	48.85
1986	29579	0.05	4389	-0.09	14.84	45.76
1987	28980	-2.03	4601	4.83	15.88	45.10
1988	29298	1.10	4389	-4.61	14.98	40.24
1989	28799	-1.70	4072	-7.22	14.14	34.55
1990	28647	-0.53	3560	-12.57	12.43	29.69
1991	28829	0.64	3550	-0.28	12.31	29.83
1992	28889	0.21	2893	-18.51	10.01	23.14

Table 58

Enrolment numbers and French enrolments in Tasmanian secondary schools and colleges - 1976-1992

From figures supplied by the Department of Education and the Arts

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male							
≤ 2 hrs	671	166	1	-	1	5	844
2-3 hrs	415	150	21	9	-	-	595
> 3 hrs	-	12	11	6	4	18	51
total	1086	328	33	15	5	23	1490
Female							
≤ 2 hrs	597	179	5	11	9	23	824
2-3 hrs	453	211	63	76	-	-	803
> 3 hrs	-	16	25	17	21	51	130
total	1050	406	93	104	30	74	1757
All							
≤ 2 hrs	1268	345	6	11	10	28	1668
2-3 hrs	868	361	84	85	-	-	1398
> 3 hrs	-	28	36	23	25	69	181
total	2136	734	126	119	35	97	3247

Table 59

Secondary French students in Tasmanian Government schools - 1988

From DEET Survey 1988

Of the seven LOTEs listed, French had most enrolments (42% of the total), ahead of German with 2486 (32%). French accounted for 41% of male LOTE enrolments, 43% of female LOTE enrolments.

With the diversification of LOTE offerings, it is to be expected that the French percentage of all enrolments would drop, but it has not dropped as much as the actual French numbers have. French enrolments have dropped "drastically" but not steadily: numbers have decreased by 76.21% over the period 1976 - 1992, but there have however been some years when French has

gained ground, and then again, some particularly bad years, such as 1990 and 1992.

Year	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	HSC	Total	% LOTE enrol.
1988	2686	1095	159	171	259	4370	40%
1989	2670	909	140	151	192	4062	35%
1990	2534	601	76	127	212	3550	30%
1991	2501	756	90	52	151	3550	30%
1992	1827	708	74	71	213	2893	23%

Table 60
Secondary French students in Government schools in Tasmania - 1988 - 1992
From figures supplied by Curriculum Services, Department of Education and the Arts

According to a member of staff of the Department of Education and the Arts, French has several times been jettisoned as dwindling LOTE enrolments have led to schools reducing the number of LOTEs offered. Within the shrinking LOTE market, French has decreased as official policy has aimed at the balance between Asian and European languages. In the words of one official in 1991, this "has taken the balance from about 25% Asian/75% European in 1987 to 47% Asian/ 53% European in 1991. On present indications, in another 2-3 years we could well see 60% Asian/ 40% European". In 1992, the proportion was 46.88% European and 53.12% Asian. In this climate, morale amongst French teachers is low, with particular resentment being felt when they have been asked or required to retrain as teachers of the more valued Asian languages. Barrie Muir, of Curriculum Services, has felt compelled to write letters in response to calls to remove French from the curriculum. Despite all this, it seems likely that French will remain one of Tasmania's six priority languages, and will be one of the four offered at both junior and senior secondary level - French, German, Indonesian, Japanese. Chinese and Italian would only be available in senior colleges.

The decline in French numbers has led to co-operation between schools in the provision of the language: in 1990-1991 ASLLP funds financed a venture in which 12 junior French students in the Launceston area travelled from their respective schools to a central location for a 2 hour lesson once a week with an ASLLP funded teacher. In 1991, Year 9 students in the same area were able to pursue their studies of French through a cluster arrangement of five schools. ASLLP money allowed the students to travel to the provider school. There were 86 secondary teachers registered to teach French in 1991.

There is no French adviser in Tasmania, and only one *assistante*. In-service training and other support is provided in person by the French Embassy's officer in charge of language policy in Australia.

Catholic system

Of the six LOTEs listed, French was that most studied (40% of the total), ahead of Italian with 581 enrolments (26%). French students accounted for 49% of male LOTE enrolments and 34% of female LOTE enrolments.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male							
≤ 2 hrs	117	15	-	-	-	-	132
2-3 hrs	40	28	13	21	-	-	102
> 3 hrs	96	53	28	-	4	1	182
total	253	96	41	21	4	1	416
Female							
≤ 2 hrs	255	27	-	-	-	-	282
2-3 hrs	-	33	13	15	-	-	61
> 3 hrs	-	84	12	21	5	1	123
total	255	144	25	36	5	1	466
All							
≤ 2 hrs	372	42	-	-	-	-	414
2-3 hrs	40	61	26	36	-	-	163
> 3 hrs	96	137	40	21	9	2	305
total	508	240	66	57	9	2	882

Table 61
Secondary French students in Tasmanian Catholic schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Year	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	HSC	Total	% LOTE enrol.
1989	345	175	67	45	23	655	46%
1990	265	216	61	48	23	613	36%
1991	246	194	50	25	30	545	28%

Table 62
Secondary French students in Catholic schools in Tasmania - 1988 - 1991
From figures supplied by the Catholic Education Office of Tasmania

The total number of LOTE students grew over the period, from 1420 to 1911. In both 1989 and 1990, the rank order of the first three languages, in terms of enrolments was French, Italian, Japanese, but in 1991, with a massive increase in Japanese, and a decrease in French numbers this changed to Japanese, Italian, French. Meanwhile, the number of teachers registered to teach French at the secondary level increased by one to 13 in 1990 and then did not change.

The Catholic Education Office does not employ officers with particular responsibilities for LOTEs, but works with staff from the government system, using them as consultants where they are available.

Independent system

Of the seven LOTEs listed, French, with 51% of the total, was that most studied, ahead of German with 986 enrolments (26%). French accounted for 51% of male LOTE enrolments and 52% of female enrolments.

We have received no further information on French in Tasmanian secondary schools.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male							
≤ 2 hrs	90	-	-	-	-	-	90
2-3 hrs	203	125	37	26	-	-	391
> 3 hrs	45	50	12	5	7	1	120
total	338	175	49	31	7	1	601
Female							
≤ 2 hrs	284	12	-	-	-	-	296
2-3 hrs	176	248	158	154	-	-	736
> 3 hrs	64	117	34	49	28	3	295
total	524	377	192	203	28	3	1327
All							
≤ 2 hrs	374	12	-	-	-	-	386
2-3 hrs	379	373	195	180	-	-	1127
> 3 hrs	109	167	46	54	35	4	415
total	862	552	241	234	35	4	1928

Table 63
Secondary French students in Tasmanian Independent schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Victoria

Recently there have been two major developments in Victorian secondary education which have affected the teaching of French. The first is the introduction of compulsory language study in government secondary schools. The second, the introduction of the VCE, with assessment spread over the last two years of schooling, has led to a reconsideration of the manner in which all subjects, including French, are to be taught and assessed. The French Adviser worked with teachers from all systems in adjusting to this. At first, the structure of the VCE was such that it was difficult for a student to do more than one language: this cut into French numbers as students who otherwise would have done two LOTEs were forced to choose between them. A change has since been made to the compulsory non-LOTE components of the Year 11 structure, which has introduced more flexibility into the system. The May 1991 issue of *Carrefours*, the magazine of the Association of French Teachers in Victoria, contains helpful advice and hints from teachers to other teachers on how to respond to the new guidelines. This was a useful supplement to the support materials produced by VCAB.

The existence of this lively association is one of the features of French teaching in Victoria. The AFTV organizes activities for teachers and pupils (e.g. in-service seminars and workshops, film screenings). It is the largest association of language teachers in the state. Created in 1983, in 1991 it had approximately 360 members, across all systems. Numbers of French teachers are such that there is a French program at conferences of the Modern Language Teachers Association of Victoria. The AFTV is supported by subscriptions, sales, short courses and help from the French government. It is involved in the production and distribution of resources, not only through its bi-monthly magazine for teachers, but also of booklets and cassettes. The Association published a "VCE Survival Kit" to help teachers introduce the VCE in French (Butt c.1990). Financial support is given to members of the Association selected to participate in the Paris-Avignon course (five weeks)[15]: in 1992 $2000 was to be given to each participating member.

Due, perhaps in part, to a more gentle introduction of Asian languages than elsewhere, morale amongst French teachers concerning the future of the language, while not ebullient, is confident. Indeed French teachers in Victoria feel less threatened today than they did ten years ago.

Government system

In 1991 the Minister for Education and Training, Barry Pullen, announced that a second language would be compulsory for all students in Victorian Government schools in years 7-10.[16] The facilities are not yet available for this to be enforced, but in 1991, there was growth in LOTE student numbers in secondary colleges, mainly in the lower years. Indeed the proportion of students studying LOTE in Years 11 and 12 has decreased (DSEV 1992:13). In 1992, the focus was to be on the provision of LOTEs to all Year 7 students, in the form of continuous study, not as taster courses, although these still existed. As acknowledged in a pamphlet on the implementation of this policy, it is important to plan for the continuation of these Year 7 programs into subsequent years of schooling (SPDDSEV 1991). Indeed, in advising on the choice of a LOTE for study in a school, this pamphlet gives as one of the considerations, the goal of the possibility of continuous study from P-12 in the one district. Furthermore, it should eventually be possible for students at VCE level to have access to two languages within their district (SPDDSEV 1991). This cannot be achieved immediately: the implementation of this policy has resulted, in 1991, in putting many schools in the position of having to choose between LOTEs. French was well placed here: the French adviser had worked on a leaflet designed to promote the value of the language and its study, and 4000 copies of this were distributed.

In Victoria, languages are offered through four kinds of institution: the day schools, the Distance Education Centre, the Victorian School of Languages and Ethnic Schools. The latter three may be used to complement lack of LOTE provision in the first. While there was a 12% increase in the number of secondary colleges offering LOTEs between 1989 and 1990, the majority of these schools do not provide for study in senior. In only 21% of schools is it possible to study a given LOTE through to Year 12. Students unable to study the language of their choice at their level in their school may choose to enrol at the VDEC: 64% of the 1996 students studying through VDEC in 1991 were enrolled in government colleges (DSEV 1992:9). (This was the situation until 1991. In 1992, the enrolment guidelines for VDEC were changed and it is now restricted to supplementing the offerings available to rural students (see 2.2.6)). Other students from government colleges study through the Victorian School of Languages (64% of the total of 10749). This institution provides a range of languages, usually outside school hours, to a public which also includes students from other school systems, and mature-aged students (5% of enrolments). "At Year 12, the VSL is the major provider of LOTE in the state" (DSEV 1992:18).

Figures given in the tables below do not include enrolments at VDEC.

Hrs/wk	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Mixed	All years
Male								
≤ 2 hrs	2041	1173	115	11	3	8	12	3363
2-3 hrs	3038	3169	839	224	4	10	159	7443
> 3 hrs	183	145	215	308	136	76	8	1071
total	5262	4487	1169	543	143	94	179	11877
Female								
≤ 2 hrs	2324	1449	173	29	21	20	10	4026
2-3 hrs	3623	3975	1760	775	11	20	147	10311
> 3 hrs	199	198	214	385	476	312	10	1794
Total	6146	5622	2147	1189	508	352	167	16131
All								
≤ 2 hrs	4365	2622	288	40	24	28	22	7389
2-3 hrs	6661	7144	2599	999	15	30	306	17754
> 3 hrs	382	343	429	693	312	388	18	2865
total	11408	10109	3316	1732	651	446	346	28008

Table 64
Secondary French students in Victorian Government Schools 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

French was by far the most studied LOTE, with 34% of total enrolments, ahead of Italian, which had 17,005 enrolments. French accounted for 33% of male enrolments and 35% of female enrolments.

Year	Sex	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
1989	Male	4991	4507	984	452	80	25	11039
	Female	5371	4883	1705	762	236	148	13105
	Both	10362	9390	2689	1214	316	173	24144
1991	Male	5460	5126	1964	460	82	27	13119
	Female	5760	5458	1823	790	248	154	14233
	Both	11220	10584	3787	1250	330	181	27352

Table 65
Secondary students of French in Victorian Government Schools, 1989 and 1991

Despite the fact that active support was for some years directed towards other LOTEs, and despite a perceived dearth of economic arguments, a tradition of teaching and community support kept French well represented amongst secondary LOTEs. As in Queensland, the position already occupied by French has now been acknowledged in official designation of priority languages: "The following eight languages, which will attract Commonwealth finding [sic] of $300 per Year 12 student through the *Priority Languages Incentive Program*, have been nominated for major support, as they have the highest Year 12 enrolments: French, German, Japanese, Italian, Indonesian, Chinese, Vietnamese and Modern Greek." (SPDDSEV 1991).

Of the 16 LOTEs taught in Victorian government secondary colleges in 1991, French was the most studied with 26,802 students and 32% of enrolments, ahead of Italian (21%) (DSEV 1992:9, 14). It led in all but one of the eight regions (DSEV 1992:20).

> In Western Metropolitan Region, Italian is the language taken by the greatest number of students (43 per cent of students at Year 7). In Eastern Metropolitan Region, French (31 per cent at Year 7)

> and German (30 per cent at Year 7) are the most frequently taught languages. In Southern Metropolitan Region, French (44 per cent at Year 7) is the most frequently taught language.

French is the most frequently taught language in the non-metropolitan regions. (DSEV 1992:10)

French was provided in 153 secondary colleges, and was therefore also the most available LOTE, ahead of Italian (103 colleges) and German (100 colleges). It is not surprising that almost 40% of LOTE teachers taught French (DSEV 1992:21). Yet, at the same time, the demoralisation of certain French teachers is not completely without cause: "According to the college returns there are just under 300 qualified language teachers not teaching LOTE. Most of these are teachers of French" (DSEV 1992:10). Presumably this figure would not include those teachers qualified to teach French who are teaching another LOTE. The optimistic reading of the situation is that, from the point of view of personnel, French is well placed to participate in future expansion of LOTEs.

It is interesting that the proportion (19%) of the LOTE enrolments occupied by French in Year 12 is less than that in Year 7 (31%), and in fact, it is Greek (25%) which is the most studied LOTE in Year 12 (DSEV 1992:14-15).

The VCE is based on "study designs", preferring this term to "syllabus" with its connotations of prescriptive rigidity (VCAB 1990). According to the introduction, "[t]he design is consistent with the approach taken in such state and national initiatives as the LOTE Framework, the LOTE Course Development Guides Years 7 - 10, the [...] (ALL) Guidelines and [NAFLaSSL]" (VCAB 1990:1). The approach is communicative, but not radically so: it was described to us by practitioners as "watered down". The new course is not completely divorced from the past, but includes the "best of what was done previously".. Assessment procedures are somewhat weighted towards written French.

In the words of the study design, "VCE French is the French of metropolitan France" (VCAB 1990:6). Acknowledgement is made of the regional variation in metropolitan French, and of the existence of other varieties, in particular Mauritian, which is used in Australia. However, "[r]egional accents would be acceptable in oral presentation, but the course should be based on standard syntax and morphology" (VCAB 1990:6).

Four units have been designed: Units 1 and 2 were in place in 1991, and Units 3 and 4 were ready for implementation in 1992. One of the interesting features of the VCE is that it accommodates students with different language backgrounds, including beginners and those who started in a particular LOTE in primary school:

> There are no prerequisites for entry to Units 1, 2 or 3. However, the grades for common assessment tasks in Units 3 and 4 for all languages except Auslan [...] assume previous knowledge. These grades are based on what can reasonably be expected of a student who has studied the target language through secondary schooling for about three years (about 300-400 contact hours)

> prior to Year 11 and who began the study of that language with no previous knowledge of it.
>
> Most students will enter the Study at Unit 1. Some students [...] may have extensive knowledge of the language [e.g. native speakers, ex-primary programs]. In consultation with their teachers, these students may decide to enter the study at Unit 2 or 3 rather than at Unit 1. They will, of course, receive credit only for units undertaken and satisfactorily completed.
>
> Units 3 and 4 are designed to be taken as a sequence. (VCAB 1990:4)

Beginners would not be equipped to undertake the common assessment tasks of Units 3 and 4, which presuppose at least 300-400 hours of study before Year 11.

Each of the units demands around 100 hours of study, 50-60 of these being class contact times. Within each unit there are three study areas:

- Discourse Forms (e.g. cartoon, ceremony, telephone call). Teachers are instructed that discourse forms perform discourse functions and that within them there are speech functions, such as inviting or reprimanding.
- Activities, Settings and Roles. Activity clusters may be organized around themes such as travel,[17] lifestyles or history.
- Linguistic Elements. A list of essential elements for French is provided, with indications as to when their mastery should be expected (e.g. Unit 3/4) (see VCAB 1990:16-18).

Within each Unit, work requirements must be fulfilled satisfactorily for a student to obtain credit. Common assessment tasks for Units 3 and 4 were being trialled in 1990, and further developed in 1991 (see *Carrefours* May 1991:6-7).

The objectives of the four Units are to enable the students to use the language to:

- conduct the practical aspects of everyday life
- understand, establish and maintain relationships
- seek out and understand factual information conveyed orally, visually or in writing
- interpret, evaluate and use information for a purpose
- understand, describe, recreate and respond to events, emotions, ideas, opinions, values and beliefs
- entertain themselves and others. (VCAB 1990:7)

Examples of activities to be used in Unit 1 1991, published in *Carrefours* show the use of realia: a cloze test has been updated by appearing in the form of photocopied magazine articles with words effaced. Further exercises include, perhaps surprisingly, the translation "into good English" of the first paragraph of one article, and the matching of English expressions to French phrases in the text (pp. 16-17).

The French Adviser has collaborated on the production of two texts, *Ça bouge 1-2-3* (it includes a piece on the South Pacific) for Years 9 and 10, and

Les régions de France, aimed at Years 10-12. It is felt that certain kinds of materials are lacking and that the teachers and the Language Adviser should work together to fill this gap with video materials and books. It was reported that most methods using authentic materials are geared towards older students, and that collections for younger secondary students needed to be prepared. The French Government supplies magazines to schools and gives awards to students (dictionaries, books, posters, badges).

In 1991, there were eight French assistants working in Victoria. The work of the assistants in the schools has not been without difficulties, but certainly has been beneficial overall. As of 1991, they are advised by the Language Adviser. Their duties include assisting LOTE teachers (usually in 2-4 schools) and liaising with the pedagogical advisers for their respective languages.

Catholic system

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male							
≤ 2 hrs	432	78	4	-	4	2	520
2-3 hrs	1253	1023	681	438	6	-	3401
> 3 hrs	469	344	146	115	115	49	1238
total	2154	1445	831	553	125	51	5159
Female							
≤ 2 hrs	552	277	15	1	3	1	849
2-3 hrs	2351	2129	1442	604	60	1	6587
> 3 hrs	366	393	365	311	321	243	1999
total	3269	2799	1822	916	384	245	9435
All							
≤ 2 hrs	984	355	19	1	7	3	1369
2-3 hrs	3604	3152	2123	1042	66	1	9988
> 3 hrs	835	737	511	426	436	292	3237
total	5423	4244	2653	1469	509	296	14594

Table 66
Secondary French students in Victorian Catholic Schools 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Of the eight LOTEs offered, French had the second greatest number of enrolments, and 31% of the total, behind Italian, with 26130 enrolments and 55%. French accounted for 26% of male enrolments and 34% of female enrolments.

As percentage of LOTE enrolments:

1988 30% (second to Italian, with 26145 students)
1989 31% (second to Italian, with 25820 students)
1990 32% (second to Italian, with 24045 students)

Year	No. of schools	Sex	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
1988		M	2154	1445	831	553	125	51	5159
		F	3269	2799	1822	916	384	245	9435
	61	Both	5423	4244	2653	1469	509	296	14594
1989									
	56	Both	5884	4363	2628	1436	429	298	15038
1990	33	M	2502	1797	838	303	70	51	5561
	47	F	3529	2788	1437	865	309	215	9143
	58	Both	6031	4585	2275	1168	379	266	14704

Table 67

Secondary French students in Victorian Catholic secondary schools - February 1988, 1989 and 1990

Independent system

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male							
≤ 2 hrs	489	98	6	-	-	-	593
2-3 hrs	2046	2006	1205	626	-	-	5883
> 3 hrs	101	225	144	230	226	120	1046
total	2636	2329	1355	856	226	120	7522
Female							
≤ 2 hrs	487	94	-	-	-		581
2-3 hrs	2008	2099	1364	866	35	-	2523
> 3 hrs	344	358	362	402	561	381	2408
total	2839	2551	1726	1268	596	381	9361
All							
≤ 2 hrs	976	192	6	-	-	-	1174
2-3 hrs	4054	4105	2569	1492	35	-	12255
> 3 hrs	445	583	506	632	787	501	3454
total	5475	4880	3081	2124	822	501	16883

Table 68

Secondary French students in Victorian Independent Schools 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Year	No. of schools	Sex	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
1988		M	2636	2329	1355	856	226	120	7522
		F	2839	2551	1726	1268	596	381	9361
	77	Both	5475	4880	3081	2124	822	501	16833
1990		M	2135	2072	1170	788	210	106	6481
		F	2436	2318	1711	1316	571	343	8695
	67	Both	4571	4390	2881	2104	781	449	15176
1991		M	2436	1991	1147	760	208	93	6635
		F	2215	2156	1838	1279	595	319	8402
	67	Both	4651	4147	2985	2039	803	412	15037

Table 69

Secondary French students in Victorian Independent secondary schools - September 1988, November 1990 and March 1991
From AISV Surveys 1988:22, 1990:31, 1991:32

Statistics testify to a decline both in terms of numbers of students and of schools in which French was taught over the period, while the total number of LOTE students increased. However, in each year of the survey, French was the most studied LOTE, its numbers and share of the market slowly decreasing from a great height.

1988 47% (ahead of German with 6569 enrolments)
1990 41% (ahead of German with 6743 enrolments)
1991 39% (ahead of German with 6362 enrolments)

Western Australia

Government system

Hrs/wk	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male						
≤ 2 hrs	326	39	14	5	3	387
2-3 hrs	617	217	72	-	2	908
> 3 hrs	54	16	9	40	41	160
total	997	272	95	45	46	1455
Female						
≤ 2 hrs	448	113	56	17	25	659
2-3 hrs	740	419	251	-	5	1415
> 3 hrs	41	36	27	143	119	366
total	1229	568	334	160	149	2440
All						
≤ 2 hrs	774	152	70	22	28	1046
2-3 hrs	1357	636	323	-	7	2323
> 3 hrs	95	52	36	183	160	526
total	2226	840	429	205	195	3895

Table 70
Secondary students of French in WA government schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Nine LOTEs are listed, and French had the most enrolments, with 45% of the total, ahead of Italian, which accounted for 29% of enrolments. French was the LOTE most studied by both girls and boys: 42% of male LOTE students and 48% of female enrolments were in French.

Year	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total	% LOTE enrol.
1988	2191	955	501	-	-	3647[18]	41%
1989	1773	892	397	385	376	3823	37%
1990	2475	919	527	390	381	4692	37%
1991	2435	987	548	-	-	3970[19]	37%

Table 71
Secondary students of French in WA Government schools 1988 - 1991
From figures supplied by the WA Ministry of Education

For each of the years for which figures are supplied, six other LOTEs beside French were taught, French always being that with most enrolments.

Catholic system

Hrs/wk	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male						
≤ 2 hrs	92	3	4	-	-	99
2-3 hrs	284	69	31	-	-	384
> 3 hrs	-	6	12	8	10	36
total	376	78	47	8	10	519
Female						
≤ 2 hrs	150	43	25	-	-	218
2-3 hrs	432	295	162	12	15	916
> 3 hrs	-	-	42	79	88	209
total	582	338	229	91	103	1343
All						
≤ 2 hrs	242	46	29	-	-	317
2-3 hrs	716	364	193	12	15	1300
> 3 hrs	-	6	54	87	98	245
total	958	416	276	99	113	1862

Table 72a
Secondary students of French in Western Australian Catholic schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Of the eight LOTEs listed, French had the second greatest share of enrolments, 30%, behind Italian with 62%. French accounted for 26% of male enrolments and 33% of female enrolments.

Year	Sex	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total
1990	M	211	52	33	9	9	314
	F	467	258	166	94	111	1096
	All	678	310	199	103	120	1410
1991	M	240	67	44	9	14	374
	F	405	194	150	64	87	900
	All	645	261	194	73	101	1274

Table 72b
Secondary students of French in Western Australian Catholic Schools, 1990 and 1991
From Catholic Education Office of Western Australia

In both years, French was the language with the second-highest number of enrolments, behind Italian, which had 3545 and 3593 students in 1990 and 1991 respectively.

Independent system

Twelve LOTEs are listed: French is the most studied, with 53% of enrolments, ahead of German, which has 681 enrolments or 15% of the total. French accounted for 58% of male enrolments and 50% of female enrolments.

As was the case for primary students, information for French in 1991 must be extracted from returns to the AISWA from individual schools. Since the total from these returns does not match the grand total (primary and secondary) supplied by the association, one must suppose that some returns are missing. One response received shows that French is taught to Year 8 students, but gives no numbers. The total given includes one group of 79 Year 8 students in a school where "all year 8 students do a 'taster' course of French

for 5 weeks". The only other language students in that school in 1991 were 9 Year 9 students.

Hrs/wk	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	All years
Male						
≤ 2 hrs	144	15	7	-	-	166
2-3 hrs	446	188	70	5	2	711
> 3 hrs	6	28	65	49	47	195
total	596	231	142	54	49	1072
Female						
≤ 2 hrs	68	23	17	-	-	108
2-3 hrs	369	254	224	41	23	911
> 3 hrs	44	51	55	132	111	393
total	481	328	296	173	134	1412
All						
≤ 2 hrs	212	38	24	-	-	274
2-3 hrs	815	442	294	46	25	1622
> 3 hrs	50	79	120	181	158	588
total	1077	559	438	227	183	2484

Table 73
Secondary students of French in Western Australian Independent schools - 1988
From DEET Survey 1988

Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Total
795	356	234	117	118	1620

Table 74
Secondary French students in Western Australian Independent schools - 1991

2.2.2.1 General Comments

2.2.2.2 Gender Issues

An initial hypothesis was that French had an image problem: that it seemed to appeal to, and perhaps was only proper for, girls in private schools attracted to its high cultural connotations. Certainly, numbers of female French students are greater than numbers of males, and this is not always so for other languages. However, in our analyses of the statistics available to us, we sought to see if, insofar as male students do study LOTEs, there seemed to be a great aversion to French. For example, if we found that 80% of female students took French, as opposed to 15% of males, we could be fairly certain that factors such as social attitudes about French (which would enter into the selection of what was a suitable LOTE for a boys' school, as well as the choices of individual students) militated against boys doing French and/or that French was a feminine choice.

It is must be admitted that French is associated with femininity: students at one Toowoomba (Queensland) school which we visited spoke of its perceived grace, beauty and elegance (not masculine traits for these pupils). In our section on advertising, we have also seen that French is associated with

style, not technology, and so is - still - not likely to appeal to the average Australian 13 year old male. However, although in most cases (but not all), the percentage of female LOTE students doing French is greater than the percentage of male LOTE students doing French, the disparity is not as great as might be imagined when one looks at the totals alone. In most cases the male and female percentages differ very little. An obvious exception is the Catholic system in SA, where in 1988 and 1991, male and female percentages were, respectively 13% (1988), 15% (1991); and 33% and 37%. There is obvious room for improvement in attracting boys to LOTE studies, but in as much as they do take a language, French is one of the most studied.

2.2.2.3 Future Needs

In view of the increase in primary LOTE, changes must take place in secondary education. In particular, the need to deal with pupils at different levels will put great pressure on the first year of secondary. For some discussion of this, see Section 2.2.4 on transition.

It is likely that in the future there will be students with a primary background in a language whose skills are well in advance of the average secondary student for whom most materials are now planned. Consideration must be given to the development of a senior French course for students having done French for 10 years previously. Some system of advanced units seems necessary to respond to this future demand. This question is beginning to be addressed in the VCE. Elements of the HSC 3 unit course in NSW might also be elaborated, and made available at somewhat lower levels. Extension courses might perhaps be provided by universities. In this regard, the current practice of co-operation between the Department of Romance Languages at the University of Queensland and Benowa State High School suggests itself as one model. The need for more advanced resources, and indeed for teachers with high levels of proficiency, is inescapable.

Due to the long history of French as a foreign language, and the lively FLE industry in France, there are certainly many resources for French on the market. Thus the Northern Territory department can give a list of texts and background materials from which teachers may choose. Resources in authentic materials are also widely available, but it is important that teachers be given help in learning to use them. Whether all these materials are entirely suitable to the particular institutional, cultural, methodological vogues and geographical situations of teaching French in the various systems in Australia is another question. Because of the large number of books etc., rather than review them here, it seems better to give an account of perceived deficiencies in what is currently available.

Many practitioners spoke to us of the following needs:

- material which takes students across the transition to secondary programs
- material which deals with the French presence in this region
- films and videos in French need to have accompanying support materials to help the teachers' pedagogical exploitation, particularly if the teachers' own linguistic competence is such that

s/he does not feel competent in understanding the film[20] This applies at both primary and secondary levels.

- materials for immersion courses
- what is needed is institutional support for development of materials but also for gathering and circulating what is already there. This also applies significantly at the primary level.

2.2.3 Immersion and Bilingual Programs

Bilingual education in Australia has two rather separate histories, and thus provides two foci of attention for policy-makers. The broader of these, and by far the older, centres on German. Clyne, in *Multilingual Australia*, notes that in 1916 there were sixty bilingual German-English primary schools in Australia run by Lutheran churches (1982:71). Continuing this tradition, in various ways, are those language programs in which the LOTE is integrated with, or at least parallel to, the standard curriculum. There is a second kind of bilingual program, one which has tended to appear more recently, and which has hitherto been much more localised: the partial immersion course aimed mainly at those whose first language is English, with no particular community-language base. Such courses often operate with a relatively high profile, drawing attention from professionals and lay people alike. Examples of this are the programs at Telopea Park School and Nurrabundah College, in the ACT, the Lycée Condorcet in Sydney, Benowa and Mansfield SHSs in Queensland, Camberwell PS in Victoria. The striking thing about this kind of program is that it occurs most often in French. That is not to imply that other languages have no place in high-profile partial immersion teaching: there are similar programs in German in at least two states, with prospects of others in Indonesian and Spanish in the near future. The range of LOTEs concerned by partial immersion is considerable, although there must be real doubt about the possibility of providing accessible programs in character-based languages.

DEET 1991, when it evokes bilingual education, mentions French specifically. Bilingual programs are appropriate, it says, "where English-speaking children learn a language of international significance, such as French" (1982: II, 79). French is most likely to be taken as an example, in theory and in practice, because of the support it potentially enjoys, in terms of both community attitudes and educational resources. A detailed study has been conducted by the school performance review and development section of the ACT Department of Education and the Arts (1991), questioning parents about the reasons for which they send their children to Telopea Park School. The answers reveal an interesting pattern. Firstly, only 8% of the families involved speak French in the home. While some families, especially internationally mobile ones, are aiming to have their children educated in a network of French-speaking schools around the world, many others are not seeking French exclusively. They value French for its general standing, and expect that the children will be subject to greater academic rigour because of the influence of French curricula and teaching practices on the binational school, but they also welcome the fact that their children will be exposed to other LOTEs in the course of their studies. Teachers and parents alike comment on the efficiency with which students from the

bilingual program tend to learn a second LOTE when given exposure to it in the later years of primary school.

From the point of view of teachers and administrators, French must often appear better equipped, in practice, than any other LOTE to answer the quite considerable demands of partial immersion teaching within primary and secondary schools. Experience shows that successful programs usually require teaching teams in which native speakers well versed in Australian educational culture work beside Australian teachers who have very high levels of proficiency in the target language. French is not the only LOTE able to supply these, but seems to have a larger pool of well qualified teachers than most, some of them made available for new programs, it has to be said, by the dismantling or administrative neglect of more standard ones. It is important to remember that bilingual courses, especially at the secondary level, typically require two kinds of expertise, and therefore two parallel forms of training. Teachers must be fully equipped to teach, say mathematics or science, while being thoroughly sensitised to the practices of modern language teaching. Relatively few teachers present such a combination of skills, but some excellent ones have nonetheless been recruited for the teaching of French.

Partial immersion requires close, not to say intensive teaching, and is therefore likely to cost above-average amounts of teacher time. It may also entail reduced class sizes, or reduced availability of teachers for other work within the school. Teaching materials, too, can be a problem, because they must be suited to the requirements of local curricula. Texts, handouts and worksheets in the natural and social sciences have been produced in programs such as that of Benowa SHS through years of extra work on the part of devoted individuals. It must be noted, however, that there is no need for such preparation of materials to continue indefinitely at the same demanding rate. Insofar as a network of French immersion courses can be created throughout Australia, it should be possible to share (or adapt) material that is already in existence, thereby defraying costs. Some flexibility is required of school principals and departmental heads so that material can be shared. Other forms of networking are also necessary, and are beginning to be put in place for French immersion. Much research work has been carried out in recent years in Canada, where 300,000 students are currently engaged in French immersion courses, and the fruits of this work are being made available to Australian researchers by such scholars as Swain. Some of Australia's educational researchers, in turn, notably at Griffith and Monash Universities, have been paying close attention to experimental programs in this country, comparing their conditions and outcomes with those found in Canada.

We propose now to describe some of the immersion programmes which are already in place in Australian schools, and some of the issues which these raise.

2.2.3.1 Primary Partial Immersion

Following examples set by Telopea Park in Canberra, and Bayswater South PS in Melbourne which teaches German across the curriculum for several hours per day, a new initiative can be observed at Camberwell PS in suburban Melbourne. The goal is for the school to be bilingual in the sense that every pupil in it will attend classes in both English and French, and its program is described as partial immersion in the sense that half of every day will consist of teaching and learning activities in French. The program commenced in 1991, and this goal is already attained for the children who started in prep. in that year's intake; teaching materials have been developed for grade 1, and are being developed progressively to meet the needs of this first group. This will take another five years, and it is not until then that the successes and difficulties will be able to be evaluated with any precision. Nevertheless, the work done at Camberwell is of intrinsic interest, and the issues it raises have considerable significance for the teaching of French in general. Albeit partial and premature, a description of this program is in order.

The move to set up a bilingual program was initiated in the Victorian Ministry of Education, and was associated with the attempt to set up a binational school. This latter is primarily a language maintenance project, and is intended for the children of French nationals settled for brief periods only in Australia, who would otherwise not learn to read and write in their own language at the appropriate age. The aims of the binational school - now known as *la petite école* - are therefore quite distinct from those of the bilingual school, which must teach its pupils reading and writing in English. The two projects were therefore separated, and *la petite école* - although currently situated in the grounds of Camberwell PS - is an independent entity. The idea was taken up by the principal of the school and was eagerly adopted by the parents whose interest had been aroused by "talk in the media" of the value of LOTEs (there were 60 enrolments for the first year, and a similar number in 1992). French was chosen "partly by accident", partly because of the enthusiasm of the principal, and partly for practical reasons: as one of the teachers told us, "French is closer to our own base, and it would have taken much longer to get a program started in Japanese or Indonesian; it would also have taken the children longer to reach the same level, and it was much easier for us to make the resources we were going to need". Many of the issues we have discussed concerning the place of French in Australia are implicit or explicit in this statement.

A particularly interesting choice was made concerning which parts of the primary school curriculum to run in French, and when. For obvious reasons, the English language arts were out of the question, and similar considerations excluded those subjects that rely on these arts (geography, social studies, nature study and so on), where it was considered preferable for the children to learn the concepts and how to manipulate them before transferring them to French. Mathematics was chosen as the base subject because it is concrete and can be shown, criteria that also apply to music and physical education, where demonstration and talk happen simultaneously. In prep., the teachers go through the days of the week, numbers, dates, counting, which then lead naturally into the grade 1 mathematics learning proper. The grade 1 mathematics teacher, a native French speaker, starts

the year's learning by making connections between everyday talk and mathematical concepts, using the usual primary school techniques of dances, songs, pictograms, and a lot of group work. Two teachers work in the room together, one, a LOTE assistant, checking to see that the concept is fully understood by each of the 30 children in any one group and helping to revise it. Special revision sessions are not held, but topics from the mathematics class are integrated into the English class in the other half-day's work. The aim is both mathematical proficiency, and proficiency in spoken French; the children do not translate, nor do the teachers. The further aim is to move towards reading proficiency in French by about the middle of grade 2. This is achieved by the teachers writing important words as part of the normal learning, from prep. onwards, so that a great deal of written French surrounds the children in all their classrooms. The use of mathematics is a strategy that combines speaking with writing, so that the move to reading and writing in French will be a gradual transition, not a radical novelty. Parents in the early months of the program needed some reassurance that their children's cognitive progress in other areas would not be impaired by the immersion work, and the teachers invoked research on bilingual children's development to this end. By the end of the first year, all doubts had been allayed. As one teacher told us: "We don't know yet whether they are just very bright, or whether it really is due to the program; but their development has been astonishing, especially in English!"

As in any partial immersion program, the major problem has been the developing of materials and resources. The Victorian ministry has provided some funding for this purpose, and that has been complemented by donations from the parents. But the real problem is time, since all the teachers are required full-time for class-room work. The mathematics teacher is working with a friend to set up a whole, coherent set of materials for mathematical problem solving in French, geared to the age levels she will be working with. This is a major undertaking. They also need books, little stories, and other materials that can be adapted to focussed learning. Clearly these people are dedicated, resourceful, and tireless; one of them, however, has precarious health. Although there has been support for the program, this needs to be more sustained. A serious LOTE policy cannot ride on the backs of its heroines, and while this is one of the rare examples of primary immersion work at this stage, it is unlikely to remain so. Once the Camberwell experiment is known to be secure, it is likely to be imitated, so there will be a need to develop banks of resources and materials able to circulate around similar programs within and across State boundaries.

Another potential problem area is staffing. The principal has insisted that it should not be staffed by tagged LOTE teachers, and that the French staff should be part of the establishment. This principle has been accepted, and is complemented by part-time LOTE assistants. Further, it is necessary to have staff who would commit to the school and the immersion project over a long period, both for the purposes of developing materials, and in order to avoid the disablement caused by frequent staff changes. This long-term commitment has already made the school a real collective enterprise, with the students and the teachers combining their energies and their enthusiasm for the success of the program. This is clearly one of its strengths, as are the administrative and pedagogical wisdom with which the program was initiated. However, teachers at the school told us that their need for a second native French speaker with primary training is becoming urgent, and

that primary trained teachers with fluent French are still rare. Nevertheless, news of the program is spreading around Melbourne, and "people pop up". To witness, the French mathematics teacher, who not only is dual registered and dual trained, with years of work in the Australian system behind her, but has a long experience in special education with severely retarded children - clearly a treasure that could not be planned for.

Other problems will no doubt emerge as the program proceeds. Already the parents of a very weak pupil have been advised to change schools, rather than risk his failure to acquire basic grounding in his own language. But this is an isolated example: parents choose to send their children to Camberwell because of the French program (wisely, the principal has decided that there should not be two groups in the school), and although it is a local school, there are other options in the area. The more likely problem area is the arrival of children in later grades needing to be integrated into the immersion program. This will raise all the problems of mixed ability teaching, and will require the presence of highly skilled staff.

The Camberwell program is visionary, and has been set up, as far as we can judge, with an acute sense of the relation between administrative and pedagogical policy. Its work is very impressive indeed, and we can only hope that future support will allow it to move from the level of an "experiment" to that of a soundly based program. Everything about it to date suggests that it will, and the example of Bayswater South is there to sustain this optimism and to provide the hindsight of experience. However, the teachers at Camberwell expressed a feeling of some isolation: not only is there no common bank of resources, there is little opportunity for them to discuss their work with colleagues doing similar things in other parts of the country. Since the results and techniques of their work will undoubtedly feed into primary French teaching in general, beyond the specialised confines of partial immersion programs, we urge the establishment of national mechanisms of contact and exchange that will foster professional discussion both in primary LOTE teaching and in immersion teaching across the primary-secondary divide.

2.2.3.2 Secondary Partial Immersion

There is strong evidence, much of it from Canada, but some of it reinforced by Australian-based research, that partial immersion courses produce levels of LOTE proficiency among junior secondary students that were previously thought unattainable by even the best students in the senior secondary school. Year 9 and 10 groups attain very high levels of aural comprehension, and can engage in classroom question-and-answer routines at a speed that would until recently have been beyond the scope of many tertiary students. The students' ability to speak at length in the target language varies considerably, with many continuing to make fundamental errors, and their average ability to write the language correctly is often a disappointment to teachers, but there can be no doubt that, on average, their aural-oral skills are being carried far beyond what was ever attained in the past, with positive gains being made at the same time in cognitive development and student motivation. For this reason, immersion courses, in particular, provide

an exemplary response to those who think of LOTE teaching, especially in French, as inefficient and unproductive. French immersion programs have in fact already become one of the showcases of modern LOTE teaching in certain parts of Australia.

Reaching new standards of teaching and learning, at any level in our educational systems, creates new problems of a sadly familiar kind: problems of transition. When students have completed three years of junior secondary immersion, they tend to look unfavourably on the standard Year 11 course. After three years of using the language actively, they are generally impatient of any tendency to treat it as a static object of enquiry, and may be unwilling to follow the more descriptive or analytical approaches normally adopted by senior secondary teachers. In much the same way, it appears, students who have completed the bilingual Year 12 at Nurrabundah College (ACT) can have difficulty adapting to French courses at the ANU, especially where those courses involve such activities as translation. On occasions, said one tertiary teacher, they may even respond resentfully when "French" is not defined in such a way as to be consistent with the skills they already have. At every point, the established linear progression from pre-school to tertiary level is being complicated by unprecedented and unplanned forms of learning achievement.

It has occasionally been remarked that bilingual schools such as Telopea Park have attracted a degree of public attention without necessarily having a telling influence on LOTE teaching in the schools around them. One administrator observed that the Telopea Park School appears to attract more attention from outside the ACT than from within it. Perhaps this has happened, she suggested, because the binational arrangement, with its blend of French and Australian curricula, limits the extent to which Telopea Park can serve as a model for others. The situation in south-east Queensland, however, is quite different. There the grass roots development of a year 8 to 10 partial immersion model has been highly influential. Since 1985, under the committed leadership of Mr Michael Berthold and Ms Nicole Davies, French immersion has been conducted at Benowa SHS. Students study mathematics, science, music, social science and physical education in French. Much of what was done at the outset was improvised, with administrative support being provided only at the local level, by the principal, Mr Mel Philips. In 1990, the newly-formed Languages and Cultures Unit of the Queensland Department of Education undertook, with the support of the ASLLP, to extend this form of partial immersion teaching into other schools and other languages, introducing a second French immersion program in 1991 at Mansfield SHS, in Brisbane, and a similar one in German at Kenmore SHS in 1992. The influence of the Benowa program has also been felt in a neighbouring independent school, The Southport School, where year 8 partial immersion French has been introduced in 1992. Even as this new development was occurring, Benowa doubled its year 8 immersion intake in response to parent and student demand. The sharing of materials among schools is helping to reduce costs on all sides, although principals and school department heads must display flexibility if these benefits are to be fully gained. There is every possibility that French (and other) immersion courses will expand through southern Queensland's independent schools, as these schools seek to affirm and maintain their academic standing with respect to other schools in the region.

The question of transition between the senior secondary and tertiary levels has begun to be addressed at Benowa SHS by the introduction of a secondary-tertiary interface program, as a supplement (rather than an alternative) to the standard course. Each year, a course of about one semester's duration is taught to a combined group of Year 11 and Year 12 students, with courses alternating in a two-year cycle. The program is partly based on first year courses in aspects of French culture taught at the University of Queensland. When the program began in 1987, all classes were given by tertiary teachers who visited the school each week, but classes have now become the responsibility of teachers at Benowa, with their tertiary colleagues continuing to act as consultants in course planning and assessment. The effect of the secondary-tertiary interface is twofold: it gives recognition to the more advanced level reached by students who have completed three years of partial immersion, and also provides much-needed extension work for years 11 and 12. The great majority of students who have continued from Benowa SHS to university level have not, it must be said, treated these courses as a "transition", in the usual sense. They have not normally enrolled in arts degrees, or even continued with formal French studies as an adjunct to other degrees, but have rather tended to seek admission to the most prestigious professional faculties, treating French as a secondary skill which they already possessed, and could apply in such fields as law and medicine. These students, it appears, are more likely to spend time in a French-speaking country before or during their tertiary studies, sometimes engaging with others in their chosen professional field. Insofar as they do this, they may seem to be lost to "French" as a specialist field, but they are in fact remaining true to the logic of immersion learning, by continuing to practise their "languages across the curriculum".

2.2.4 The Transition Problem

With the introduction of programs of instruction in French in primary schools, a problem of curriculum design and instructional sequencing arises that had not been significant until now. It is known as the "transition" problem (cf. Imberger 1988; Cunningham 1986, etc.). "Transition" refers to the continuity of LOTE study across the primary/post-primary divide. "Since language learning is cumulative, the proficiency of children with primary language learning experience can best be maintained and further developed when there is a natural progression in language learning experiences from Year 6 into Year 7 and beyond" (Imberger 1988:5). Without such continuity, we may well end up with a lot of well-meaning LOTE policies that can ensure nothing beyond two years beginning, some students beginning at primary level, some beginning at year 7, and some, "starting again" either with the same language taught differently, or a different language. Imberger classifies the situations that produce the "transition problem" as follows:

Year 7 students who have learned a LOTE at primary school ...

- are unable to learn a LOTE in Year 7 because this area of the curriculum is not offered at the school.
- are placed with students who are beginners [in the case of a school that] teaches the same LOTE as the primary school, but does not offer an advanced class.

- are not able to continue with the LOTE they have learned at the primary school, and take up another language in Year 7. (1988:5)

The desirable situation, by contrast, is one in which:

> There are sufficient students (from one or more primary schools that have taught the same LOTE for a similar period of time) enrolled for the school to be willing and able to staff and cater for an advanced class where the LOTE is the object of instruction. This option may also encompass the teaching of some subject areas through the LOTE [...] to cater for children who have come from a bilingual program at primary level. The experience of the schools that have initiated such a program indicates that above-establishment staffing is necessary if this option is to be feasible. (1988:5)

A LOTE policy that can only ensure a brief acquaintance with any particular language is likely to result in as much wastage as was the familiar case for French in the days of its quasi-compulsory status. *The transition issue goes to the heart of the issue of the objectives of any LOTE policy.* If those objectives are predicated on the desirability of achieving sufficient proficiency in the language to enable professional, cultural, and commercial interchange in adult life, then policies must be in place to ensure the possibility of adequate continuity. If, on the other hand, the objectives of a LOTE program are more modest, aspiring to "sensitisation to cultural difference" for example, then the experience of a second LOTE, starting at Year 7 following some exposure to a first LOTE in primary school, would be preferable. Either way, the decision should be systematic, and the LOTE provision policies should be geared to the objectives. A third set of objectives for primary language instruction, that of language maintenance for community groups, affects only a small number of French-speaking children in Australia, and will not be our major focus. However, for those children who are affected in this way, principally the children of Mauritian migrants in Western Australia and Sydney, the problem is the same as for all community language groups: the objectives of a good transition programme for these children must include the integration of the home language with the language of school. This can be achieved by programs of French across the curriculum which are also appropriate for children who have learned French in a partial immersion programme such as the one at Camberwell.

Transition is of particular importance to French for reasons to do with the continuing interest in French as a LOTE among the Australian population. It is a preferred second LOTE for people of a variety of cultural backgrounds, both for reasons of cultural prestige, and because of the useability of French as a viable *lingua franca* in many places, from South East Asia, through Europe and the Middle East, to Latin America. There are many documented cases of parent groups voting for the introduction of French into their schools, over their own language, because of their perception of it as useful currency, as the language of education, or as a language of political neutrality able to be used in situations where cultural and ethnic tensions might arise. The tradition of French in schools that we alluded to in our introduction, the strong supply of French teachers, its world importance as a language, and the continued vigour of research among French specialists into pedagogical methods, have ensured a continuing market for new teaching materials, of

which there is now an impressive variety available in Australia. Such forces create an atmosphere which facilitates the introduction of French to primary programs, where other languages, though desirable in their own terms, would be more difficult to introduce owing to the relative paucity of materials or the even more reduced supply of competent teachers. In these circumstances, the policy to introduce language instruction in primary schools can lead more by chance than by design to the widespread provision of French. There is a need to calculate the outcomes of this fact, and one of the ways of doing so is to address the transition question. As we have said, while some of the effort invested in this way might lead quite properly to a desire on the part of a school and its community to vary the LOTE experience of its students at Year 7, it is also important to cater for continuity for those school communities that wish, rather, to build on the basis of primary French towards genuine adult competency in that language. This is not an unrealistic goal if the primary instruction has been sound and if the transition courses have aimed at communicative competence and/or the use of the language across the curriculum. It is particularly realistic for children whose first language is another Romance language (cf. lo Bianco and Monteil 1990:xii).

Transition issues differ depending on whether they deal with one or another of three main types of incoming student: (i) students who have commenced LOTE instruction in years 5 and 6; (ii) students who have commenced LOTE instruction in junior primary; (iii) students who have been involved in an immersion or partial immersion programme such as that offered at Camberwell PS. This is because the introduction of LOTE at each of these levels and in each of these ways entails a different set of objectives and outcomes. Obviously, the ideal solution for students of type (iii) is that bilingual or immersion programs be continued into secondary schooling, but this is not always possible. The problems faced by a post-primary teacher in the second situation described by Imberger (1988:5), that is, a mixed class, can, with students of type (i), be solved by treating their class as a mixed ability class, and mobilising strategies common to most teachers in these circumstances (cf. Cunningham 1986; 1992 (in press); Commins 1992). But it would be foolish and short-sighted to suppose that pedagogical ingenuity can solve all the problems associated with transition to post-primary French programs.

Consider the following scenarios. For students studying with a post-primary teacher concerned to instil in the first year of secondary education an idea of separate disciplines, and the particularities of learning secondary subjects, the experience of secondary French may be entirely discontinuous with the experience of primary studies in the same language. This discontinuity may be such that some senior LOTE teachers and advisers consider it preferable for the student to switch languages at this level, rather than risk being "turned off" the idea of language instruction altogether. Other teachers self-consciously, and systematically, teach to the idea that "secondary French" is an entirely different experience from "primary French". Neither of these solutions is desirable, and must result in considerable wastage of the effort invested in primary programs. Yet our interviews with teachers across the country indicate that these two ways of coping with the problem are widespread.

These generalised scenarios show that the problems associated with the transition issue cross the whole spectrum of areas of educational policy - administration, teacher training, curriculum, and materials. Nevertheless, their intersection is significant, and the quality of outcomes depends on the convergence of policies arising from each area.

2.2.4.1 Administration

The primary and secondary school systems are stringently separated in most State Education policies. This separation can take the form of regulations restricting dual registration, or, less formally, the fact that teachers are usually employed in single schools. Few school subjects are in practice taught continuously from P to 12, and in most cases, perhaps with the exception of English and Mathematics, discontinuity is no doubt appropriate. LOTE is clearly an exception, and we believe that the move towards more widespread LOTE instruction in primary schools requires more flexibility in the systems. It is obviously desirable that teachers at post-primary level be familiar with the materials and techniques in use in primary LOTE programs, and be able to build upon them, instead of "starting again" in such a way as to run the risk of boredom for the students, or worse, undermining their students' confidence in communicative French. It is equally desirable that LOTE teachers in primary schools have their language competence accredited on the basis of similar standards as those that apply to secondary teachers. LOTE teachers should have the possibility of dual registration so that they can be systematically employed across the primary-post-primary divide to address the transition problem directly.

One of the obvious ways of addressing the transition problem is by coordinating the primary and secondary schools of an area in "clusters". This is also known as "district provisioning". Theoretically, it allows children from a primary school in which a given LOTE is taught to choose to attend a high school where they can continue their studies in the same LOTE. This measure is clearly a necessary, but not a sufficient condition, to ensure effective continuity.

2.2.4.2 Teacher Training

This second factor is connected with the administrative issue. There is a difference in the educational philosophy governing work in primary and post-primary schools. It is at this point that most students move schools, and even in non-government schools where some students remain in the same group from P to 12, the shift from primary to secondary school is a major event. What counts as a proper set of materials and activities for secondary students alters accordingly. The shift towards "academic methods" in secondary schools frequently results in a marginalisation of communicative competence in favour of formalised grammar, or knowledge of the language as a foreign object. It is clearly desirable that materials be developed to facilitate continuity. Even in LOTEs where there is considerable variety of well-conceived materials, as there is for French, LOTE teachers should be trained to develop the language skills started at primary levels into the sophisticated language arts required for communicative competence at the

upper secondary level. This entails far greater competence on the part of the teacher in two areas: in her/his own language competence, and in curriculum and materials design. Pre-service training at present militates against this, again because of the separation of the primary and post-primary systems. Modifications of the pre-service training of secondary French teachers to equip them for the changed role entailed by the transition issue are necessary. Likewise, specialist pre-service training such as is already in place in the Diploma of Education at La Trobe University, to train primary LOTE teachers, should become more widespread, and should be based on stringent requirements concerning language competency and awareness of methodological issues. It is also imperative that in-service seminars and workshops be provided on a regular basis for serving teachers who increasingly face the transition issue without adequate preparation for the needs of their students, and who may be unprepared for the relative sophistication of their students' working knowledge of French.

2.2.4.3 Curriculum and Materials

French teaching is in the fortunate position of having access to a wide range of commercial methods and materials, as well as to the long experience of the profession. However, it is manifestly evident that the major developments in methodology focus on the beginning stages of instruction, and that there is relatively little imaginative work on the advanced stages of learning. This is a problem for advanced courses at tertiary level, where most teachers develop their own materials and course design; but with the growth in primary instruction, it is rapidly presenting a problem for the post-primary levels. Under models of language learning in which "the grammar" was acquired by drill, an "advanced" course was not a problem: the language itself was understood as a curricular sequence, with the more complex structures coming "at the end", ideally in parallel with literary texts that could demonstrate the language in all its glory. Under audio-lingual models of instruction, an advanced course might involve access to the written language. Many "communicative" approaches suppose, likewise, that "speech" - meaning one-to-one exchange - comes before "writing", while other communicative approaches understand the design of their curricula in terms of an increasing range of registers in both the oral and the written language. If we suppose that communicative teaching of the latter kind is the more desirable form of instruction, and supposing that it is this that informs the primary programs that feed their students to the transition classes, then the transition teacher must be prepared to use a range of materials and activities that will favour acquisition of French of increasing discursive range. This clearly demands considerable language competence on the part of the teacher, as well as considerable imagination in devising work. Beyond a certain point, the very concept of a curriculum in "French" as a specifiable subject-area breaks down, in favour of a curriculum that teaches the variety of uses of French. There is a strong argument in favour of developing LOTE instruction on the model of language arts across the curriculum for advanced students, for students emerging from a primary programme starting in year 3, and for those from a partial immersion programme. LOTE teachers trained on the assumption that French, like geography, is a specific subject area, are ill-equipped to provide this kind of teaching. Secondary immersion programs (see Section 2.2.3) give the lead in

this area, but the problem they face is the need for vast resources - in funding and in human time and skill - to develop the materials. If ambitious programs such as primary immersion and those starting in year 3 are to fulfil their promise, the transition courses that follow them must work towards adaptable adult competence in the language. To do so, however, course design, activities, and materials must break out of the mould of the "French course".

Likewise, the availability of flexible methods is restricted by the fact that publishers cater to two separate markets. On the other hand, publishers are always alert to changes in their markets, and a clear policy change on this issue will no doubt provoke appropriate responses in the long run. However, the development of materials for transition programs should not be left to chance. We believe that, to ensure the maximisation of outcomes from their LOTE policy, governments should encourage the development of personal and material resources that will take students beyond the beginning stages of LOTE learning. The NLLIA might well be empowered to commission the development of methods, and the training of specialised teachers, to this end.

2.2.5 The "Cultural Content" of French in Schools

An issue that arises in the design of materials for school programs in French in Australia is the issue of cultural content. Let us state this issue in the form of a dilemma: do we give our students textbooks whose situations are "European", teaching them to talk about the effect of the coming of spring on plants and animals with which they have no familiarity? - or do we develop materials for them that place French in an Australian context, teaching them to say "wallaby" with a Parisian accent? Of course, we can avoid the issue of the natural environment (unless "ecology" is the topic for a senior school assessment task), and replace family gatherings around the *bûche de Noël* or the *galette des rois* with barbecues and hot-dogs, but the dilemma remains largely the same: do we focus on the "typically French", or do we make a virtue of relevance? The question serves to point to the fact that "communicative methods" are not automatically a teaching of culture, despite their use of situational or context-rich communicative functions.

Perhaps, as a general principle, Australians need to learn that foreign language teaching is not necessarily an updated form of colonialism. Of recent years, "relevance" has been a major ideological thrust in Australian education, driven largely by the post-war refusal of the "cultural cringe" and by a developing cultural nationalism. In almost any discipline studied in our primary and secondary schools, the neglect of Australian conditions and of Australian data and problems was in urgent need of correction, but, by contrast, say, with literature, sociology, economics or history, the solution for LOTEs may not lie in the simple transposition of the language into the Australian context. This will vary with the language and with the objective of teaching it under formal instructional conditions. In a community language maintenance program, for instance, that kind of transposition may be exactly what is appropriate, and may well be an important instrument in overcoming the sense of cultural conflict between their own culture and that of their parents that some children experience. French is a different case, because

language maintenance is unlikely to be the reason that most children learn it. While the epithets "community", "trade", and "international" are problematical when used as descriptions of kinds of "languages", they may well have some point when used to describe the aims of a teaching program. The problem of "cultural content" varies accordingly. For an Australian student, French is an "international" language - not merely the language of France, but the language of a variety of other "francophone" cultures, and a *second language* for many others.

In the light of this fact, we can reexamine the dilemma with which we started this brief discussion: framed as an exclusive choice between two opposites - the students learning "Frenchness" as the content of French, vs. the students transposing their unmodified view of the world into French sentences - it is a choice between two alternative cultural essences. As such, neither horn of this dilemma is acceptable: as a general principle, LOTE learning in Australia must be involved with the project to *challenge* cultural essentialism. As one primary school teacher said to us when we asked about her students' understanding of French culture: "Stereotypes and generalisation about Frenchness are adult talk: children don't think that way. When things come up you talk about them and get interested in them, as you always do with primary school children." In this respect, the South Australian guidelines for primary French are exemplary: each of the model topics includes some special information that marks the difference between French and Australian cultural habits, and the opportunity to expand on it, at the same time as showing the continuity between the children's familiar experience and the unfamiliar: French names and the rules that govern them, with the equivalence and its limitations between English and French names, the French tradition of the circus, French games and songs, traditions of eating and the like (Mayfield, 1988). At the same time, the model dialogues associated with even this admirable collection include material that is specific to an Australian context and not comfortably locatable in most francophone cultural settings.

There is some presence among materials in use in Australia of text-books that make more or less systematic reference to French-speaking cultures that are not "France". A great deal of material produced in France now uses a mix of fictional characters designed to reflect the multi-cultural population of that country, but there is little opportunity for an Australian student to learn about francophone African countries, the French Caribbean, or French Canada. An apparent exception to this last was a text-book we observed in use in a girls' school in Melbourne: designed for English speaking Canadian school children, it contained little information about Quebec culture, and its fictional characters were boys whose favourite pastimes were as irrelevant to the girls who were using the book as the European spring was to the previous generation of French learners in North Queensland. While Canadian French teaching is clearly an important model for the Australian efforts, its political objectives (to create a bilingual culture) are inappropriate to this country, and use of materials coming out of Canada needs to be adjusted accordingly.

Nevertheless, some significant exceptions are to be found:

- There is growing awareness of the wealth of cultural diversity subsumed under the word "French" among senior

French teachers and French advisers, particularly with respect to the south Pacific region. An interesting course has been developed for students in NSW (Dixon et.al, no date), called *Noir et blanc*. consisting of a booklet for the teacher, another for the student, songs, and posters. It is "designed as a pre-elective course for late primary and/or early secondary students. The setting is New Caledonia and involves Australian, Canaque and Metropolitan French children in a French-speaking environment". (Dixon et.al, preface to the *Livret du professeur*).

A project funded under the ILOTES scheme has recently been initiated by a group led from the University of Queensland. The group includes university and school teachers from a number of states, and the project is to develop materials on the French in the south Pacific for use in secondary schools. A variety of materials will be collected, from children's stories to histories of French exploration, from press reports to political analyses, and annotated for its connection to materials in commercial methods as well as its useability in projects to teach French across the curriculum. Initial research for the project is expected to take three years. The collection will then be made available for circulation on a national basis. ◆

2.2.6 Distance Provision

Given the historical importance of distance education in Australia, it is not surprising that enrolments in French in this mode have a long history. They continue to be strong. With the exception of Victoria, the figures are contained within the tables for primary and secondary enrolments in the state systems in our previous sections, so rather than repeat that information, we prefer to look at some of the special issues that confront this form of delivery. Before we do so, however, the breakdown of enrolments per year at the Victorian Distance Education Centre for French in 1992 is of some interest:

Year 7	12
Year 8	64
Year 9	39
Year 10	73
Year 11	115
Year 12	94

This pattern is explained as follows. In 1991, the VDEC enrolment in LOTEs was at the astonishing level of 1996 students (DSEV 1992:9), but in 1992, this had been severely reduced, due to a change in enrolment guidelines. The brief of the VDEC used to include city students who could not attend day schools - the elderly and infirm, full-time workers etc. - but they are now under an obligation not to include these groups, and their clientele is restricted to students in non-urban areas. However, the clustering or regional provisioning system means that the VDEC has the role of supplementing the offerings of regions where small rural schools cannot offer some subjects. The figures show the level of demand for this mode of delivery in the senior years.

Presumably this corresponds to the non-availability of French at this level in rural districts, either because there is no teacher, or because enrolments in individual schools do not warrant the timetabling of French in their standard offerings.

There is a particular problem for distance teaching in the move from a traditional, grammar based course to an interactive or communicative approach, given the virtual absence of interaction between students, or between students and teacher except by the written word. Hence, an increasing reliance on telematics: "The Correspondence School uses telematics to teach more than 60 students for 30 minutes per week in 27 small regional colleges" (DSEV 1992:18) (see also Cunningham 1992).

Another problem for distance educators is the availability and circulation of resources. This has been particularly acute in Victoria, where the move to the new VCE study guides has entailed a need for variety of resources in subject areas not previously part of the French syllabus. The French adviser has been involved in rewriting the distance course for senior French, and the problem seems to be one of time and human resources in working up appropriate courses in a lead time that even the classroom teachers found short.

These questions are on the agenda in the Queensland policy, where the minister has included them explicitly in his statement of intent:

> "While the main thrust of our present efforts has been the expansion of LOTE in schools generally, we need now to take into account the particular difficulties in expanding language teaching in some isolated regions and schools, in special schools and in distance education. We have made a start in some of these areas but stronger efforts are needed now to ensure equity of access to language learning.
>
> This will require flexible approaches so as to develop self-access, student directed and distance learning modes to ensure the conditions for sustained language learning across the state." (Braddy 1991:4)
>
> "There are big developments in computer-assisted learning of languages (and a national centre for this at the University of Queensland) and we will be investigating the development of a network arrangement for schools disadvantaged in the languages area. Telelearning using distance education methods is developing well, with 50 schools on line in eight regions. These methods, together with the use of travelling teachers and language advisers, should help to redress these regional imbalances over time." (Braddy 1991: 7)

Given the renewal of interest in distance education in the 1990s in Australia, we can expect that there will also be renewed investigation of methodological issues for LOTE instruction in this mode. Dromard (1992) represents research into the pedagogical issues affecting French in distance mode, and contains proposals for course structuring.

2.2.7 Attitudinal Survey

2.2.7.1 Aims

The aim of this survey was to identify the reasons why Year 11 students discontinued their language studies after completing Year 10. It also provided information about the positive motivations of continuing students.

2.2.7.2 Methodology

The methodology of this research is divided into three sub-stages:

Stage 1: Design of questionnaire
Stage 2: Sampling procedure
Stage 3: Administration of questionnaire

2.2.7.3 Stage 1 - Design of questionnaire

The questionnaire was designed by a sub-committee (Dr. Boshra El Guindy, Dr. Tony Liddicoat, Professor Jiri Neustupny, Dr. Ng Bee Chin, Dr. Anne Pauwels, Mr. Steven Petrou). A copy of the questionnaire is attached in Volume 10.

The questionnaire was designed to encompass questions relevant to all languages as well as issues relevant specifically to the nine key languages. To ensure that the responses were in a manageable form, the questions were designed to elicit closed-ended answers as much as possible. However, on occasion, open-ended responses were encouraged. There are 4 main sections to the questionnaire.

2.2.7.4 Background Information

This section of the questionnaire aims at examining the profile of students who undertake language courses. The questions relate to the students' gender, country of birth, other subjects studied, socio-economic status and general career aspirations (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q6 and Q7).

2.2.7.5 Language Background

The questions in this section were designed to find out what language backgrounds the students come from. A self- evaluation of their LOTE skill is included (Q4, Q4, Q13).

2.2.7.6 Reasons for Discontinuing

This section is directed at students who did a language at Year 10 but discontinued the language at Year 11. The questions are designed to find out the reasons for discontinuing (Q10). The students were supplied with a range of responses ranging from language internal factors such as 'the language is difficult' to language external factors such as 'I don't like the teacher' to timetable clashes.

2.2.7.7 Reasons for Continuing

In this section, questions are directed at finding out the reasons students continue doing a language up to Year 11 level. The students have to choose from a list of 15 responses. In this section a Likeart scale is used where the respondents have to evaluate the statement on a scale of 1 - 5. Based on other studies on language attitudes and language learning, the responses provided consist of two major components; instrumental reasons and integrative reasons. For example, responses 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, and 11 of Q11 are integrative reasons for language studies and responses 4, 5, 9 and 10 of Q11 are instrumental reasons for language studies. Miscellaneous responses to do with external factors such as peer group pressure and the role of teachers were also included.

These questions were repeated for students who did more than one language at Year 10 level.

2.2.7.8 Stage 2 - Sampling Procedure

The target population of this survey is Year 11 students who did a language at Year 10. Ideally, random sampling of all Year 11 students in schools with LOTEs would have been the best option. However, limited time and budget constraints have precluded this as a possible option.

Instead, it was decided that each language group would provide a list of schools offering their language. This list of schools is not meant to be a comprehensive listing but as far as possible efforts were made to ensure that the list would contain equal proportions of independent, government and Catholic schools from each state. After the list of schools was received, a letter requesting permission to conduct the study was sent to each school on the list. The questionnaires were then sent to schools which agreed to be surveyed. The fact that we could only survey the schools which responded positively meant that our sample is biassed in some way. This has imposed some constraint on the amount of control we have over our sample; an obvious but avoidable limitation of this study. (For example, we ended up with a sample which is largely skewed towards independent schools, not because we particularly wanted to focus on independent schools, but because more independent schools than state schools agreed to participate in the study.)

2.2.7.9 Stage 3 - Administration of Questionnaire

The surveys were administered to the selected schools by Research Assistants from each of the nine Key Language Project Groups. The surveys were then collected and those surveys which were not in the target group were removed. The remaining were processed by the Research Area of Social Sciences, La Trobe University. The statistical analysis was done by Dr. Robert Powell and Mr. Michael Day. Coded questionnaires were entered into FoxPro database by professional data entry staff and analysed using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) on a Vax 880 research computer. Analysis was explored with the use of frequency tables, cross tabulations and multiple responses.

2.2.7.10 Results and Discussion

The results were cross-tabulated with 4 main variables. These variables are: (a) the five states - Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland South Australia and Western Australia; (b) the three types of school - independent, Catholic and state; (c) gender: and (d) language background; background speakers and non-background speakers. As not all aspects of the cross-tabulations are of significant interest, only relevant aspects of the cross-tabulations will be discussed here.

The results are divided into five sections:

1 Information about sample
2 Profile of students
3 Language background
4 Reasons for discontinuing
5 Reasons for continuing.

2.2.7.11 The Sample

In total, 648 students completed this questionnaire for the French language project. Table 75 contains a tabulation of the sample according to the five states.

State	No. of Students	Percentage
Victoria	154	24%
Western Australia	97	15%
New South Wales	301	47%
Queensland	61	9%
South Australia	35	5%
Total	648	100%

Table 75
Number of students by state

As can be seen from Table 76 below, a substantial portion (45%) of the sample is from independent schools. This proportion is lower, however, than for some other languages surveyed.

Type of School	No. of Students	Percentage
Independent	293	45%
Catholic	54	8%
State	301	47%
Total	648	100%

Table 76
Number of students by type of school

Of this number, 562 (87%) did French in Year 10 as their first LOTE (henceforth referred to as L1 students) and 86 (13%) as their second LOTE (referred to as L2 students). Out of the whole group, a total of 400 (62%) discontinued French after Year 10. Of these, 340 (52%) were L1 students and 60 (9%) were L2 students. 248 students (38%) continued the language to Year 11. Of this group, 222 (34%) are L1 students and 26 (4%) are L2 students. This information is summarised in Table 76.

Student Status	L1	L2	Total
Discontinued	340 (52%)	60 (9%)	400 (62%)*
Continued	222 (34%)	26 (4%)	248 (38%)
Total	562 (86%)	86 (14%)	648 (100%)

Table 77
Student status: discontinuing or continuing enrolments in Year 11
** A small number of students filled in the questionnaire inappropriately, leaving some doubt as to the exact number of those not continuing.*

More than three fifths of the students in the sample discontinued French after Year 10. This is in keeping with an established pattern for French and other LOTEs.

2.2.7.12 Profile of Students

Gender distribution
51% are males and 49% females. There is no indication at this level of an over-representation of female students in LOTE studies, or in French in particular.

Place of birth
75% were born in Australia. For those not born in Australia, the most common places of origin were England (4%), Singapore (2%), South Africa (2%) and Lebanon (2%). Of these, only Lebanon would appear to be a likely source of French background speakers.

Parents' educational level

Level	Father	Mother
Primary	4%	4%
Post Primary	21%	24%
Year 12	18%	24%
Undergraduate degree	18%	17%
Postgraduate degree	31%	22%
Other	6%	4%

Table 78
Education level of parents

Table 78 shows a high proportion of parents with tertiary education, almost 50% of fathers and 40% of mothers having at least one tertiary degree. This may well indicate a tendency for children of more educated backgrounds to study LOTEs, but it probably also reflects the over-representation of independent schools in the sample.

Subjects studied at school concurrently

As the list of subjects given in the questionnaire is very long, only those listed by more than 20% of the student sample will be mentioned here. Table 79 shows the most commonly studied subjects.

Subject	Number	Percentage
English	570	88%
Mathematics	384	59%
Chemistry	281	43%
Physics	258	40%
History	164	25%

Table 79
Most common subjects taken concurrently by students of French

Students taking French have a tendency to be enrolled in science subjects as well. There is no evidence here to suggest that French is restricted to the humanities area.

When the data are analysed according to the gender variable, it becomes clear that far fewer girls enrolled in French are taking it in conjunction with Chemistry and/or Physics.

Subject	Males	Females
English	89%	87%
Mathematics	60%	59%
Chemistry	48%	38%
Physics	50%	29
History	27%	24%

Table 80
Gender differences in subject choice

Intended level of study

A remarkably high proportion of students (88%) indicated that they intended to continue studying at the tertiary level. This proportion was maintained fairly well across all states and all education systems. NSW

had a somewhat lower percentage (83%) while all other states had over 90%. This may correspond to the higher proportion of state schools in the NSW part of the sample. The proportion of state school students in the whole sample intended to proceed to tertiary level was 83%. In Catholic schools, it was 89% and in independent schools, 93%. There was only a very slight gender difference across the whole, with 89% of males intending to go on to tertiary level, and 87% of females.

Intended level of study in French

While 88% of students intend to proceed to tertiary level, 24% of them intend to continue their French studies at that level (27% including TAFE). This proportion is notably higher than for Chinese, although the reasons for the difference are not clear.

There are striking variations between states in the proportion of those intending to continue to tertiary French, although the samples in WA, Queensland and SA are small, and the results should be treated with caution.

Level	Vic	WA	NSW	Qld	SA
Tertiary	32%	12%	17%	37%	40%
TAFE	1%	0	5%	0	0

Table 81
Intention to study French by state

There is some evidence here of a difference between Victoria and NSW and that is consistent with other trends detected throughout this survey.

2.2.7.13 Language Background

Fewer than 5% of students in the sample were of French-speaking background, although 36% said some LOTE was used in their home. Chinese background speakers were more numerous (8%) in French classes than French ones, and Arabic background speakers (5%) were just as much so. Italian and Spanish background speakers were present, but amounted to only 3%.

2.2.7.14 Reasons for Discontinuing French

The most important single reason given by students for not continuing French was that other subjects were considered more important (24%). Timetable clashes did not appear to be a major factor (6% only) but this factor may have weight when taken with the previous one. 18% of students said that they found French too difficult. This is, rather surprisingly, exactly the same as for Chinese.

Reasons for discontinuing French	Percentage of Responses
I do not like languages	9%
There were too many native speakers	2%
The subjects were too difficult	18%
My friends did not take this language	2%
I did not like the teacher	12%
The language was not available	1%
I considered other subjects more important	24%
There were timetable clashes	6%
Other reasons	26%

Table 82
Reasons for discontuing French at Year 11

2.2.7.15 Reasons for Continuing

For this question, students were required to rate a series of 15 statements on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being not at all important, and 5 very important. Any rating below the median 2.5 is taken as a non-committal response to the question. An average rating for each statement has been calculated. Table 83 represents L1 students' response pattern. The L2 responses were too incomplete to be analysed.

Reason for continuing	L1 mean
1. Ethnic origin and/or religion	1.5
2. Contact with ethnic community in Australia speaking the language	1.4
3. Other contact with the country where the language is spoken (past travels, friends, parents, work etc.)	2.6
4. I thought this would be an easy subject for me	2.6
5. I had good marks in the past	3.6
6. I like studying languages	3.8
7. I like studying about the culture and society of the country where the language is spoken	3.2
8. I particularly like the teacher	2.1
9. I do not have definite plans for the future but I feel the language would enhance my future career prospects	3.5
10. I have definite plans to work in an area of employment where the language is used	2.4
11. I want to travel or live in the country	3.6
12. I have been advised to continue by my family	2.4
13. I have been advised to continue by my teachers	2.5
14. One or more of my friends are taking the subject	1.7
15. Although I had no strong desire to take the subject, other subjects were even less attractive	1.8

Table 83
Reasons for continuing with French

There is some evidence here to support the standard notion of French students taking the language for integrative reasons. Reason 6 rates highest of all and may well be a factor, in many cases, for the importance given to reason 5. Ethnic origin and community contact (reasons 1 and 2) are the least important

of all, showing French, by contrast with some other LOTEs, to be studied in Australia very much as a foreign language. This is not to say, however, that students have no sense of contact with French-speaking cultures: reasons 3 and 7 are of some significance and reason 11, the desire to travel, one of the most important of all.

It must be noted, nonetheless, that French students are not motivated solely by integrative purposes: reason 9 figures prominently and belies the suggestion that "European language" students, especially those in French, are studying mainly for pleasure, as opposed to material benefit. As the response to reason 10 shows, there is much uncertainty about actual outcomes, but instrumental motivation is still a crucial factor. The discrepancy between the responses to 9 and 10 shows that students are developing a general awareness of the potential usefulness of languages without always identifying actual career paths. In that, they appear to reflect quite accurately the current state of the employment market for language graduates. As the graduate survey (Section 2.3.2) shows, students are likely to find themselves using French from time to time in a whole range of professions, but they are far less likely to gain formal recognition for this, or see it fully integrated into appointments and promotions criteria.

2.3 Post-secondary Education

2.3.1 Universities

2.3.1.0 Introduction

Given the key position that University departments of French have had in fostering the learning - indeed the general profile - of French for the past century, it is not surprising that universities have been where changes in policy and social attitudes have had their first impact. There is a widely held view that, if French has not already disappeared from the offerings of many Arts Faculties in this country, it may be about to do so. This story gained currency following changes in the design of the arts degree brought in by most Faculties during the 1970s: French did indeed change its status, almost overnight, as a result of these changes. But it did not go off the curricular map. There were approximately ten lean years, which saw considerable reductions in the numbers of students taking French and in the staffing establishments of most departments; between 1981 and 1990, the numbers of students enrolled in French at tertiary institutions had dropped from 10,222 EFTSUs to 7,228 EFTSUs (*Australia's Language* 1991:II,71). Yet this period also saw an impressive effort to renew the shape, and the variety, of course offerings. Since the late 1980s, the decline in enrolments has effectively ceased, and most departments now record stability, if not rises in their enrolment figures. Coupled with the proliferation of new courses - amounting in some cases to a reinvention of the discipline - university French now has the look of a vigorous and energetic sector: neither

tired, nor depressed, and certainly not moribund. It does, however, continue to be worried, both about its long-term position in the wider curriculum, and about its aims and objectives. It is this rather more mixed picture - certainly more interesting than a tale of decline - that we shall investigate.

2.3.1.1 Enrolment trends

	Macq.	U of Tas.	QUT	ANU	Woollg.	UQ	UNSW
1987	81	16.16	33	101.261	120	79.07	
1988	72.8	10.41	40.3	107.525	113	79.98	
1989	74.5	18.16	5.137	40.8	87.539	109	63.13
1990	79.8	27.83	5.645	44.9	87.92	113	66.20
1991	86.8	31	8.112	58.1	115.116	112	70.03

Table 84
EFTSUs for the period 1987-1991
Figures obtained from responses to a survey distributed by the authors

	1990	1992
University of Adelaide	74.00	84.2
Australian National University	57.69	75.8
Flinders University	67.42	
James Cook University	29.47	
La Trobe University	73.78	88.00
Macquarie University	77.60	79.00
University of Melbourne	94.56	
Monash University	94.56	
Murdoch University	6.88	
University of Newcastle	31.50	
University of New England	109.07	
University of NSW	94.63	72.44*
University of Queensland	113.97	124.00
QLD University of Technology	16.85	9.088*
University of South Australia°	9.90	
University of Sydney	210.30	
University of Tasmania	19.33	35.50*
University of Western Australia	80.01	
Edith Cowan University†	14.71	
University of Western Sydney	4.40	
University of Woollongong	25.25	101.207

Table 85
Comparison of EFTSUs 1990/1992 where available
°In 1990, SA Institute if Technology
†In 1990, WA College of Advanced Education
**Indicates that figures were supplied for Semester 1 only and have been adjusted to estimate a figure for the full year*
There is some discrepancy between the figures reported in Leal (1990:II,163) and those supplied by the institutions for 1992. Note in particular: QUT, UNSW, Tasmania, and Woollongong

2.3.1.2 The Last Twenty Years

Despite the general buoyancy demonstrated by these figures, the story of the decline did not just appear from nowhere. The basis for it can be charted with some precision, for there is a period in recent history that has been experienced as a period of great difficulty. Since the early 1970s, Departments of French in Australian universities have been going through a period of rapid transition - some would say, of 'crisis' - in which the role of French in the arts degree, in the university at large, and indeed in society, have changed. The ability of individual departments to adapt to the changed conditions has been sorely tested. The two departments whose practice of the "old" model was most highly respected and most successful on a variety of criteria - Melbourne and Adelaide - are the ones that exemplify most acutely this history. Staffed by respected scholars, and commanding the allegiance of school-teachers who had studied in them, they are nonetheless currently in severe difficulties. To a limited extent, this paradox can be explained by the slowness of these two departments to adapt to the changing conditions of French in Australia; partly also to the fact that both departments have been understaffed and without a professor for some years, and have kept going on the basis of short-term junior appointments. Individual factors such as these are present in many university departments of French, but Melbourne and Adelaide seem to have suffered from an unfortunate combination of several of them at once; they have, as a consequence, been subject to the forces of attrition that emerge in an institutional context such as that of the tertiary sector in Australia during the 1980s: looking like weak or ageing departments, they have succumbed to competition for funds and resources and have gone into survival mode. Pressure on the staff has been such that there has been little energy for innovation or change, and with minimal possibilities for the injection of new energies and ideas, serious interpersonal problems have arisen, in both cases with very destructive consequences.

These problems should not be explained away in personal, psychological terms, since the very fact of their arising in parallel in the two institutions shows that they are symptoms of a larger history. Reviews have been held to enquire into the viability of each department, the universities in each case considering options that have ranged from abolition through merger to a reinvestment of funds. Happily, it seems that in both cases, the last of these options has been recommended. These are only the most dramatic manifestations of a situation that has affected almost every French department in the country. Until recently, there were no fewer than 7 vacant chairs of French (at the Universities of Tasmania, New England, Adelaide, Melbourne, La Trobe, Queensland, James Cook); the New England chair has just been filled, and moves are afoot in Melbourne and Adelaide both to fill the chairs and to redress the staffing situation somewhat. Further, it has become evident from the academic vacancies advertised in *The Australian Higher Education Supplement* over the past year or so that many departments are able to appoint at least junior people to supplement staffing arrangements that had in some cases dropped below the threshold of viability for enrolment levels that had given the lie to the dire predictions. At Melbourne University, the post-secondary enrolments stand at around 100 each year, with the beginners course regularly attracting some 95 enrolments, and at Adelaide, both the post-secondary and the beginners' streams attract

constant enrolments of 60 - 70 students each. (These figures can be tellingly compared with those of the Macquarie department which attracts some 80 elementary students and 60 post-secondary students into first year each year, with a staff establishment approximately twice the size of that of Melbourne or Adelaide.) With institutional recognition of the fact that the decline was a local phenomenon, unlikely to predict long-term trends, there are indications that the tide has turned, although university authorities remain cautious, and in most cases are reluctant to appoint people to positions with a career structure. The imbalance of senior to junior staff in most departments of French is a cause of considerable concern. No matter how gifted and conscientious, junior staff with poor career prospects cannot ensure the long-term vitality of a discipline. When people in these categories are used to "replace" colleagues lost through death, illness, or retirement, it is an exploitation of their talents, not an investment in the work of a department. It is imperative in the 1990s that university authorities take stock of the soundness of the French tradition in Australia, its persistence, and its significance in a wide range of intellectual and professional domains, and make it possible for their departments of French to do better than merely survive.

To understand the pressures that have led to situations such as those alluded to, we should recall that the discipline of French has been radically modified over the past 20 years: accordingly, the patterns of enrolment, the staffing arrangements, and above all, the structure of the curriculum, have all changed. The period is marked by two institutional events of some moment: (i) in some States, the breaking of the relation between the universities and the secondary schools that was formed by tying the school exit examinations to the university entry requirements, and in all states, the devolution of responsibility for the examinations from the universities to the secondary authorities; and (ii) the abolition, in most Australian universities, of the compulsory language requirement for the arts degree. At the time, some staff of French departments saw this as the beginning of doom, while others welcomed or at least admitted it, on the grounds that "doing French" for a token year, in classes sometimes numbering 500 bodies in the one lecture theatre, was worse than useless. Conditions such as these do not lead to learning outcomes of any value; even the relatively modest aspirations of the modified direct method cannot be practised, and no genuine discursive interaction is possible. It is the latter group, by and large, who have weathered the storm, since it is they who have attended to the pedagogy of their subject, and have worked towards quality outcomes for a more modest number of students.

The disappearance of the compulsory requirement had two precise and long-term consequences. One was the reduction in the number of French classes taught by the schools. Senior enrolments in French diminished sharply, and small groups of students at Years 11 and 12 were no longer considered viable; then the reduction pushed downwards. Generally in the population, French was considered to have had its day: "nobody uses French any more" - "why not learn a useful language" - "French is for girls in finishing schools" - are currently widespread attitudes to the subject. But parallel with this official reduction, and as a response to it, university departments introduced elementary courses in French. There is no university department that does not teach elementary French, and most teach at least two streams, one for post-secondary students, and the other for beginners. The situation is

paradoxical: while secondary teachers have suffered serious loss of morale, if not indeed loss of their jobs, with school communities believing the stories of the irrelevance of French, and school administrators showing some alacrity in catering to the new market, demand for French has remained very high. After initial losses, as our figures show, most university departments record stability in their enrolment numbers over the past few years, and some are now recording rises. But these numbers are now distributed into two (and sometimes three) first year courses, and some departments, such as Sydney and La Trobe, maintain the separation of the two streams for the whole degree. This brings about further consequences: (i) staff resources have to be channelled into the elementary courses, and away from the advanced courses; (ii) since university teachers are under an obligation to do research, their redeployment can lead either to a radical separation of their teaching from their research area, a situation profoundly to be regretted in any university discipline, particularly the humanities, or to a recycling of their research energies into methodology, a further reason for the vigour of methodology research in Australian French departments. However, in the event of the department's deciding that the elementary subjects can be taught by part-time, junior or contract staff, who have neither obligation nor opportunity to do research, the elementary language courses are in danger of being taught as service courses, with limited objectives, and disappointing retention rates; (iii) with the introduction of elementary courses into the university degree, there is less reason for the departments to think of themselves as involved in a common enterprise with the schools. Allied with the breaking of the "matriculation bond", subjects such as French which continue to have a relatively strong presence in the secondary system, particularly in the independent schools, are taught in the two kinds of institution as if there were no continuity. Teachers have little ongoing relation with the universities, and their students are frequently ill-prepared for a curriculum which no longer resembles the one the previous generation studied under. On the other side, post-secondary first year courses in the universities are often slow to respond to changing competences in their incoming populations, and have little or no knowledge of the methods and materials that the most up-to-date teachers are using. The result is some institutional hostility, on the one hand, and a problem resembling the "transition problem" that affects students who move from primary to secondary LOTE programs.

The same period has seen major changes to the curriculum in French studies. This is partly because of changes to the administrative structure of degree courses in most arts faculties, due sometimes to the introduction of semesters, the change from full units to half-year units, and the system of options that has tended to displace the old sequence of whole year courses with mandatory content. This structural change has allowed departments to introduce a range of new courses, partly in response to changing demand, and partly to take advantage of the research interests of members of staff. The second reason for this change should be sought in the broader intellectual climate, a pointer to which is the range of research interests in evidence among university teachers of French. In 1972, Ross Chambers, assuming the responsibility for the discipline in the University of Sydney, argued in his inaugural lecture for a name change, to "French Studies" rather than "French" to accomodate changes that were already well in place. French studies should "aim primarily ... at achieving a healthy interdisciplinarity between the different branches of the subject, while recognizing that this

presupposes (a) the development of certain branches ... and (b) the cultivation of theoretical thinking in each branch, so that interchange can become much less a haphazard exchange of insights and much more a conscious process of disciplined research" (Chambers 1972:1-2). Most pointedly, one of the "branches" to be developed should be the study of non-metropolitan French-speaking cultures (Chambers 1972); most French departments now include at least a nod in this direction, with some offering whole courses, others integrating "francophone" texts into flexible course-structures, and still others offering whole sequences of study. While many of these are literary studies, some focus on other questions: for example, at the University of Melbourne there is offered a course in linguistic variation (using regional and non-metropolitan varieties of French), and there are other courses of study in the culture and sociology of non-metropolitan French communities. Other changes arise from the shift in methods of literary study, the older methods of literary history giving way to more recently developed forms of textual analysis that can be applied to objects well outside the purview of "literature". Following Chambers' (1972) appeal for an interdisciplinary and theoretical approach to the subject area of French, and arguing for this change in his inaugural lecture in the University of Queensland, in 1975, Michael Spencer showed that it must necessarily entail a major modification of curricular decisions and their concomitant pedagogical goals and practices (Spencer 1992 (1975)). In many departments, options on film, on French linguistics, on methodology of language teaching, and on contemporary society are now offered, and some teach specialised courses on translation in response to the growing awareness of their students of the vocational possibilities offered by proficiency in the language. Monash University offers a combined degree in French and Engineering, and a course in in Business French, both of which we shall discuss below. This growing heterogeneity matches the diversifying clientele for language courses: as Leal notes (1991: II, 350), "the fact that 40% [of students at 3rd year level] come from other than BA programs indicates a perception of the general utility of language skills in a variety of career and life-paths". Leal's figures do not indicate whether this proportion is maintained for French alone, but "French retains occupational attractions, particularly to BEd students, due to "the continued importance of French ... in State School systems as a language of 'culture'" (1991:II,351). Colleagues around the country reported that their students were drawn from approximately the same range of degree courses as is listed by Leal.

It should be noted that the two areas of change we have discussed are in a relation of considerable tension. Given (a) twenty years of the reduction in the size of most departments, (b) the need to redeploy staff to cater for differential student entry points, and (c) the growth in the range of curricular possibilities, departments are continually caught between two conflicting requirements: the need, on the one hand, to demonstrate to their students the range of possibilities that knowledge of French opens up, to teach to this range, in particular, to cater for the vocational and intellectual needs of a far more heterogeneous student population than was the case prior to the 1970s, and the opposite need, to reduce their course offerings in line with their resources. Official advice in the recent review of French in the University of Queensland was to return to a more standard range of courses, since the staffing situation was unlikely to improve. The conflict between this advice, and the fact - pointed out by the post-graduate students of the department - that the distinctive work of the department consisted

precisely in the non-standardness of its offerings - was ignored. The contradiction is not usually stated so baldly, but it shows up with striking clarity in the staffing policies of most departments: since first-year language courses, both beginners' and post-secondary, are the priority areas, departments whose human resources are very stretched can offer few possibilities for students wishing to major in French, let alone do honours in the subject. The French staff at Flinders actively discourage their students from doing honours, and send them to Adelaide University if they insist, while the French staff at the ANU are concerned that intending honours students in their department are no longer prepared for the work of the honours year by the work they have done in the standard major. The contradiction also shows up in the fragmentary nature of most programs. Only in the University of Sydney is the department of French Studies large enough to cater for the variety of student interests, and for the full range of curricular options characteristic of the discipline at the end of the 20th century. That department not only offers an impressive range, but can offer full majors in each of three areas (literature, society, and linguistics), with a full major possible from each of three entry points in language. Elsewhere, each of these and other areas show up in programs as once-off options. At Monash, the third largest French department in the country, the program had been planned along the same lines as Sydney, but most options now have no continuation, and some are offered only every second year. As we were told at Monash, "we don't have streams; we have periodic flash flooding, and sand-bagging". The situation is similar in smaller departments, and in those departments where the range has been pared down to permit continuity, glaring ommissions are evident, either of linguistics, or of non-metropolitan cultures, or of literary theory. Very few departments plan for their students graduating with any career other than teaching in mind, and very few, therefore, devise courses with other vocational aims in view. Yet the teacher trainers tell us that most departments are not able to offer their students any courses that specifically equip them for this profession. The courses, in other words, are varied, and attempting to cater for a great diversity of needs; but as Wykes observed for the 1950s:

> The great diversity of the aims of teaching French in Australia is a handicap, and yet the composition of the school population and the geographical position of Australia seem to demand this diversity. (Wykes 1958: 184)

The variety of curricular options and research interests evident in university departments of French should not be taken as an indication that the departments or their staff have lost their way. Rather, it is a sign of considerable intellectual energy. But this energy could be used in ways more productive to the students of French in this country than is presently the case. The solution does not lie in a standardised curriculum, in reducing the offerings of strong departments or in requiring of small departments that they diversify beyond their means. Nor should the question of the curriculum as such be the object of a centralised national policy, like a state syllabus or a party line. French has demonstrated not only its persistent viability, but the variety of ways in which students find it valuable to continue their studies in it to an advanced level. Almost all departments now offer thoughtful and well-developed courses of instruction in the language; it is the range of allied studies that is the problem. Accordingly, departments should be encouraged to develop their own specialities, and students, to

move freely among departments, even interstate, so as to construct majors in whatever area of cultural or language study they choose. Such a solution requires organisation and cooperation at three levels:

- between the departments. The Association of Heads of French Departments of Australia (AHFDA) has recently foreshadowed consideration of a scheme that would organise the range of local specialisations into a national plan to allow students to take advantage of the complementarity of offerings in different departments. Such a plan would need to include arrangements to ensure that approximately equal numbers of students move from and to any given department;

- between the universities, in particular, their faculties of arts. Clear and flexible guidelines for cross-enrolment and cross-accreditation should be developed;

- between the federal government, the universities, and the students, to make it possible to implement the scheme. On advice from the AHFDA, the Government could accredit particular departments to the scheme for particular subject areas, the accreditation to be reviewed at regular intervals; it would then need to find a way of getting the students and the courses together. This could be done in one of two ways. (a) Departments could apply for funding to develop courses for distance delivery, thus eliminating the necessity for the students to relocate. We see three disadvantages in this option: 1. distance education is expensive, and not the best way of teaching languages; 2. students would not have access to library resources developed by the department *in situ;* 3. the numbers of students wishing to pursue specialised majors in this way may not warrant the investment of time and resources. (b) The alternative is to provide relocation funding to individual students who need to move interstate. This should be done on application, and as an adjunct to AUSTUDY or whatever scheme of student support is in place. It would involve no more than several hundred dollars per individual, and the numbers seeking to pursue majors in this way are unlikely to be great. Most of the scheme could be implemented within states, and often within cities.

◆ Limited possibilities for inter-department collaboration exist at present, and are taken up unsystematically, and in ways that are *de facto* limited by state boundaries. In NSW, with three metropolitan departments of French and three regional departments, a networking meeting of staff is held once a year. This is the only state in which this happens. It does not, as far as we could determine, extend to cooperative course arrangements, but it fulfils an important professional need for staff. In Melbourne, where there are three metropolitan departments, no networking at all appears to occur, and while it would be an exaggeration to call relations between them hostile or distrustful, there is clearly no enthusiasm for more cooperation. Reasons advanced for this regrettable situation range from the urban geography of Melbourne, to the differences of educational philosophy and curriculum among the three departments. In Adelaide, limited sharing of courses occurs between the departments at Flinders and Adelaide University,

and some cross-institutional cooperation, including the U of SA, is evident in the organisations of SAIL and the CLTR. The question does not arise for the sole department of Tasmania, we have no information on the relations between the UWA department and that at Edith Cowan, while in Queensland, collaboration is envisaged between the expanding languages department at QUT and the older established department at the University of Queensland, although with JCU, which is as distant to the north as Melbourne is to the south, contact is by sporadic distance communication only. ◆

2.3.1.3 The Curriculum in French - Aims and Objectives

Leal (1991) introduces his chapter on "Aims and Objectives of Teaching Programs" in Modern Languages in Higher Education with a lament:

> The Review Panel attempted to elicit the documented or at least implicit aims of language departments [...]. Responses were exceedingly diverse and defied all efforts at statistical quantification. In only 16 of the 84 departments surveyed was a specific mission statement supplied. In many cases it became clear that fundamental departmental emphases were to be found more reliably in the later statements on curriculum priorities and on expectations that staff had of students. (Leal 1991: I, 75)

Our experience confirms this. There is no single statement of the aims and objectives of French programs that we could make that would hold for the majority of departments teaching the language; nor indeed can most departments supply formal or informal "mission statements" for themselves. Insofar as such statements do exist, they are - as the genre demands - couched in general language, and cannot be used to frame precise pedagogical goals. Given the range of courses now on offer, it is to be expected that statements of overall objectives for any department's curriculum would be increasingly difficult to make. A healthy difference of opinion now exists between those departments that believe that a major in French should be structured by a "core" of subjects, and those that believe that no standard core is anything but a set of time-honoured habits that should regularly be questioned. "French" for this latter group is simply a language that can lead to the heterogeneity characteristic of any culture (cf. Cryle, Freadman and Lacherez 1992).

The middle to senior ranking members of staff in French Departments in Australia studied under a system whose aims and objectives were unquestioned and unambiguous. The point of an honours program in French was to train young Australians to imitate - perhaps even to become - the product of a French literary education. Hence the survey courses, using the text-books in use in French high school teaching, that introduced the foreign students to the great names and cultural movements of each century deemed important for cultivated conversation. Hence, too, the focus on literature, the courses being structured on the basis of the great canonical writings of any period. The language courses were geared to this objective: the students' linguistic competence had to be such as to permit them to discourse on

literary and cultural matters with their equals in France, and to appreciate (and continue to learn from) the subtleties and richness of the masters of the language. Anything less than an honours program was conceived simply as a quantitative reduction of this overall objective - fewer centuries, fewer texts, less detailed study. This picture of the attempt to reproduce the genuine native article is a simplified version of a curriculum that was in practice a great deal more varied and pedagogically sensitive than this (see Kerr 1975 for a contrast between the programs in French at Melbourne and Sydney Universities; Adelaide, with a much more broadly based conception of culture than the restrictively literary, was different again). However, the picture is not wildly inaccurate, and it serves to point up the massive changes that have occurred in a single generation. It further serves to explain one of the difficulties that staff of present-day departments have in stating their aims: their current objectives grow out of a systematic and thorough-going *refusal* of the aims that informed their own training. This is no doubt the most demanding moral and professional choice that a teacher might be called upon to make: educational theory knows - and indeed explores the fact, as one of its privileged areas of theoretical investigation - that the generalised unconscious aim of any teacher is to reproduce him/herself; the more particular aim, of rendering the student independent of her/his teacher, is not a contradiction of this but a dimension of self-reproduction. Part of the teacher's stock-in-trade, then, is the tradition within which s/he is both product of this process, and an agent of it. We recall these points in order to show something significant about the profession of French teaching in Australia. The literary tradition which it attempted in the past to reproduce for its students was a tradition in just this sense: a French literary education was an education by, and for, *hommes* and *femmes de lettres*. The attempt to transplant this tradition and imitate its educational outcomes has ceased to be the aim of most French programs in this country: it is understood to be inappropriate to the purposes of *second or foreign language* education. It is further understood to be simply unattainable for students who start French at elementary level in the first year of their university studies, and the quantitative scaling down of the ultimate objective cannot correspond in any way to a useful outcome for students, whether post-secondary or beginners, who enrol for less than a major. But what the aims *are*, for university teachers of French in Australia in the 1990s, is in a considerable state of flux. Most frequently, aims are stated in negative terms, reflecting the refusal of the objectives of the "old" curriculum, without any clarity or singularity of purpose emerging from it: "Well of course we can't just go on doing survey courses like the old Lagarde et Michard", said one colleague, "but we do need some way of giving them a sense of cultural context". The feeling of regret evident in this comment is symptomatic of the general situation, as is a further problem: for this speaker, the general objective of the old curriculum had given way to a more modest aim, which it still nonetheless informs. Elsewhere, this secret after-life of the old objectives persists in comments such as the following: "The question is, whether students *should have read* say, Racine, or Baudelaire, in the course of a major in French;" and "We all did our graduate work in literature, but we spend a lot of time teaching in areas not our speciality, such as language and civilization". It may also persist, as nostalgia or as a dream, in the decision of the University of Melbourne to rename its recently advertised chair of French after A.R. Chisholm, at the same time as it was wondering whether it should award that Chair to any candidate who was a specialist in language "only". (It is most unlikely that Chisholm himself

would have experienced the same dilemma, not only because of the breadth of his own understanding of the discipline. It must be said that the dilemma arises only when the debate concerning curriculum is simplified to a dichotomy that opposes *exclusion of* literature to *exclusive reliance on* literary usage. This latter was never the rationale for the "traditional" curriculum. We recall that the direct method (retained in Victoria, overthrown in NSW) relied on "basic French", which was an analysis of frequency of usage across the full range of registers. Given this, the objectives of the "traditional" curriculum assumed a continuum between "ordinary" usage, and the pinnacle of the language in its literature.)

University teachers of French do indeed have difficulty stating clearly the objectives of a training in French, and this is partly because they are continually trying to make sense of the widely diverse curricular possibilities they now face; it is also because they find themselves in an environment where market forces, and the expansion of cultural theory, are continually throwing up new possibilities. For some, the curriculum is fragmented, for others, it is heterogeneous and full of potential; for all, however, the question of objectives extends from those of the curriculum in general, to those of the language component of that curriculum. Once the rationale of the course in French had been troubled, the place of learning the language within it was necessarily modified. This occurred in tandem with changes in methodology of language instruction, and the shift away from the traditional focus on the written language to oral-aural methods, and latterly, communicative methods. Within the narrowly defined language component of any department, staff are inclined to frame their objectives in terms deriving directly from the newer methods: "communicative competence over such and such range of registers", "good oral-aural proficiency, with some exposure to accuracy in writing" and so on. The conceptual framework of methodological research admits of fairly precise formulations of goals, but the problem of descriptive vagueness tends to reappear when language teachers are asked exactly what their students' learning outcomes are. Instead of what a student can actually do after, say, three years post-secondary study of French, teachers are inclined to answer in terms that reproduce the goal statements of the methods they employ. It is at this point that the apparent precision of such statements is revealed to be relatively illusory. There are two factors to be taken into account: first, teachers have entirely precise outcomes in mind for their examining procedures at the end of any particular course unit, where they are in possession of facts pertaining both to their students' entry levels, and to their own materials and techniques. Asked to assess their students' attainments at the end of a whole major, neither these facts, nor the examining procedures, can be part of the calculation of outcomes. Second, a student having done a major in a middle-sized department will always have studied a range of subjects not included in the "language" component, but which, in a variety of ways, must contribute to his/her knowledge of the language. This is particularly the case in departments such as La Trobe, and UNSW, which insist on using French for instruction in all courses; but it is also the case for students reading literary texts, or studying regional dialectology, or surveying the French press, whether or not the classes are taught in French. It is almost impossible to calculate the contribution of such studies to a students' competence in the language, but contribution there undoubtedly is.

One area in which there is relatively "hard" information about learning outcomes is in the relation between the beginners' streams and the post-secondary streams. Most departments introduced elementary streams in first year, with a hope of merging these students either in second year or in third year with the post-secondary students. At various points in the past 10 years, this decision has been reversed, and the streams are now held separate for at least the first two years, if not for the entire major. The most precise statements of student attainment levels that we obtained came in the form of contrasts between the elementary and the post-secondary groups. The following statement was made by colleagues at La Trobe: "[by their second year] the elementary students don't have the breadth of linguistic resources available to the post-secondary students, but they use what they have much better". At Monash, the elementary students are kept in separate groups for their language instruction, and join the post-secondary culture course in their second year, whereas the intermediate stream is integrated with the post-secondary stream at second year. At La Trobe, the streams are kept separate, but elementary students may join advanced options in the post-secondary stream at the discretion of the chair of the department. At Queensland, the move to keep the streams separate has been introduced for 1993, with special arrangements for those students who wish to move into honours. Administrative decisions such as these are the clearest pointer to the way departments assess the competency of their elementary students. But notice that the post-secondary students are used as a bench-mark, without similarly precise criteria being formulated for them at the various points of their training. The following comment, also from La Trobe, serves as an exception to this generalisation: "post-secondary first year students are uninhibited in their oral work, but are not strong in their written work, and have little or no linguistic awareness". Nevertheless, comments such as this rely on the same implicit comparative technique; here, the first-year student is compared with an advanced student who has acquired linguistic awareness and has some competence in written French. It would require painstaking interviews to elicit diagnostic comments such as these for all groups of students at all levels of their courses, but the form of the comments we did obtain suggests that in any case, they would be diagnostic of what the students cannot (yet) do, rather than descriptive of their positive competences. Although positive aims are implicit in these statements, they remain far too general, and far too tied to the goals, to have the "public relations" effect that Leal projects (1991:I,76).

Leal's assessment of this situation is unambiguous:

> ... the Review Panel is convinced of the current necessity for all language departments to produce a clear statement of aims and objectives that are quite specific in nature. It sees no contradiction between such a statement and respect for traditional values. The pressing need in 1991 is for a clear statement of aims and practice so that rational expansion and coordination of language study may be possible. (1991:I,76)

Leal's analysis of the dilemma is framed as an alternative between "traditional values" on the one hand, and the pragmatic aims of language study on the other: "the traditional and admirable humanising aspects of study of another language and culture and ... language study [as] a mere technique" (1991:I,76). Notwithstanding our respect for the thoroughness of

Leal's survey, we beg to differ from him on this point. In our view, this analysis misstates the problem, and can only serve to perpetuate the dilemma. Ever since Labov's ground-breaking work (1972) - indeed, since Bakhtin in the 1930s - it has been an assumption of socio-linguistics that a language is not a homogeneous system; it follows that the cultural practices with which it is associated are also heterogeneous. Work on register, on domains of language use, on specialised professional and class languages has entirely recast the problem of the relation of language to culture. While most departments of French teach "standard French" as a base, most also recognise that this is an abstraction, strategically useful only, as a foundation for extrapolation into specific, and highly differentiated contexts of use. It is inappropriate, therefore, to frame the dilemmas of the modern curriculum and its aims as a dilemma between pragmatic objectives, defined in socio-linguistic terms, and "humanising" objectives, defined by a conception of language and culture that pre-dates Labov by half a century or more. In socio-linguistic terms, the conception of language and culture that informs the traditional curriculum is non-generalisable; that is, literary conventions and the modes and objectives of literary analysis, are a "specialised language" - and, in particular, a specific cultural practice - just as surely as are the language, and cultural assumptions, of engineering, of commerce, of diplomacy, or the "language of the inner city". In practice, in the diversified and fragmentary curriculum of French studies characteristic of the 1990s, literary or high cultural forms occupy a relativised position alongside other domains that corresponds in general terms with this theoretical proposition. The "field" of, say, French studies should be understood as a loosely organised set of diverse and heterogeneous domains. It can no longer be supposed that to each national identity corresponds a unified cultural essence. Nor can language departments be expected to state their educational aims in terms of degrees of progress towards a singular pinnacle of knowledge. Insofar as the outcomes of university training are no longer described in these terms, that ought to be considered not as a failure, but as a recognition, albeit a sometimes grudging and implicit one, that the old pedagogical aims cannot be kept intact. It can no longer be expected that a kind of literary French person will be the standard product of a university major in French. The outcomes, and the competencies involved, will be more local, and more register-specific.

A curriculum in French necessarily implies a linguistic description of the language, and hence, a theory of language in general. To make this point a little more concrete, let us return to the example of the language component of a traditional curriculum in French. Recall the foundation in "basic French", a certain proportion of the standard lexicon abstracted from the whole on the basis of frequency of use. The syntax and the sounds of the language were likewise considered as a quantity, divisible into parts which could be taught sequentially. In the case of the syntax and morphology, these parts were arranged in ascending order of complexity rather than frequency of use. At the end of the sequence, students were deemed to have "covered" the whole of "French grammar", and to be ready for stylistic refinement. Some colleagues still describe their aims in terms of "coverage": "At the end of first year, we had covered all of French grammar; their oral competency was not good, but their aural comprehension was quite fair and their writing accurate". This is a standard assumption of text-books that take the problems of grammar as their topics: the language is finite, and aims can be stated in terms of how many chapters are taught in a certain period of time.

The assumption grows out of a linguistics of "system", whether structuralist or not. The system is finite, only its uses are infinite. To take the system as the object of the instruction is to assume that extrapolation to use is automatic and unproblematical. Hence the caricature of the foreign student in France, who can quote every rule of French grammar in the book, citing chapter and verse, with no mistakes, and can apply none of those rules in his/her own use of the language in everyday exchange. Notice that the examinations described by Wykes (1958), by Kerr (1972) and by Hick (1966), which standardly included questions *on* grammar, are precisely the mechanism that produces such a student, but even without the examination "grammar" question, text-books and curriculum design that start with the assumption of coverage will do something similar just as surely. Let us reiterate: on the premiss that the language is a finite quantity or system of rules, it can be divided into teaching blocks and arranged to traverse a learning sequence so that coverage can be achieved by the end. In such a case, objectives can be clearly stated, examinations and outcomes calculated accordingly, and proficiency levels standardised. Now take the opposite example of curricula designed in terms of "communicative competence". The "communicative" approach is based on twenty years of linguistic research that has reversed the relation of the "system of rules" and their "use". Insofar as there is a "system", it is provisional, continually being modified by the infinity of uses, and to be extrapolated from them. This extrapolation can be taught as a process involving the induction of patterns of regularity and variation. The good language learner is a "willing and accurate guesser ... constantly looking for patterns in the language" (Commins and Mackay 1992, quoting from Naiman et al 1978[21]). Any speaker of the language, native or not, is "competent" when s/he can proceed inductively from the variety of use to the pattern-making and hypothesis formation that go beyond mere imitation to the creativity Chomsky uses to characterise performance (1965:5-9). But notice that if "use" is *infinite* - this is a base assumption of modern linguistics - then no curriculum can state its aims in terms of global or partial "coverage". Some of the confusion surrounding the statement of goals and objectives in modern French instruction comes, again, from the fact that the teachers have acquired their own language competence under a coverage model, and are teaching under a communicative model. The discourse of language acquisition to which they are used is inadequate to their current practice, but the communicative methods typically proscribe metalanguage, so they have little else to put in its place. Further, the communicative approach is still young, and the range of its possible outcomes still being assessed. This is the area of current research, and there are, for this reason, *no certainties*. This fact should not, however, be interpreted to mean that the aims themselves are confused: simply, the aims of communicative teaching cannot be stated in quantified terms or in terms of the material used alone. Nor, indeed, can they be standardised from classroom to classroom, let alone from institution to institution across the land. To base a language instruction curriculum on communicative premisses entails that the materials and implementation of the method are specific to the discursive situation of each group of learners with their teacher; were this not the case, then the method would have been reduced to a set of drills for imitation. There is quite clearly a need for university teachers of French to evolve a metalanguage to describe aims and learning outcomes that will meet the requirements of "public relations" and accountability to which Leal points. But this metalanguage will not include propositions based on closed lexical sets or systems of rules, of which a proportion can be learnt as a

"stage" of the instruction. Rather it will include an elaboration of statements such as the following:

a language competency is identified as the capacity to meet a communicative need *never before encountered*.

b it therefore includes the capacity to adapt material acquired to new requirements.

c the base from which extrapolation starts is holistic, that is, any communicative situation is likely, as a matter of course, to include every topic of grammar, every combination of sounds, that would, under traditional instructional design, have been sequenced from "simple" to "complex". Likewise, it will include a heterogeneous lexical range, as against the thematically closed learning of textbooks whose models were placed "at school" or "in the family".

d hence, the base cannot be stated as a quantity of the grammar.

e the units of learning are necessarily organised as dynamic, rather than quantifiable units. Each will ideally provide material and the opportunity for adaptive reutilisation, and will be the object for inductive pattern-making and the reflexive processes that students need in order to understand the nature of "language", of "French", and of its acquisition.

f If any unit of learning - say, a sequence of lessons - is a dynamic process such as stated above, then the objectives and outcomes of a course or a sequence of courses can be stated in these terms. To requote our colleague from La Trobe: "the students have (such and such a range) of resources, and make good adaptive, or merely imitative use thereof".

It becomes possible, on the basis of descriptions such as these, to predict a student's capacity to move from classroom French to authentic French, and among specialised discourses. Predictions such as these are more useful to a prospective employer than examination results, since these latter are "summative" and generally framed in terms of a proportion, or mastery, of the content of the teaching.

Leal (1991:I,76) identifies the difficulties in stating aims as a significant area of incomprehension between language professionals and the general public:

> ... specific aims are extremely useful for the public relations exercises in which departments are more and more frequently called upon to participate. Most academics in language departments are unaware of the extraordinary ignorance of people in the community, including the most influential, about the activities of higher education language teachers. Many people believe that nothing has changed in language teaching since the usually unhappy lessons of their youth. If this ignorance is to be dispelled [...] language departments must be more ready to display their wares in an easily comprehensible fashion.

This ignorance, claims Leal, extends to "academics in other areas of the campus" and even to the students (1991:I,77), and would be dispelled "by a

clear statement of aims and objectives". To this end, he recommends "a nationally accepted system of language proficiency testing" (1991:I,76, and Recommendation 27). The history of proficiency testing in the United States has a similar rationale: recounting this history, Brown (1992) writes:

> It [proficiency testing] was certainly seen as an aid in the shift of stress in second language learning and teaching from an analytical language-based curriculum toward a communication-based one, a shift already in motion with the communicative competence and functional-notional syllabi. It was hoped to lay ultimate stress on what people do, rather than on what they know, or on the number of courses they have taken. It was seen as a pathway to unification in the profession, as a means to standardize assessments of skill in ways that will be useful to business, governments, and the academic world. It was hoped that it would aid teachers to focus upon more practical, pragmatic objectives and strategies in the classroom, with global communication goals in mind. (Brown, 1992:2-3)

Notice, in this account, that the hopes for the benefits of proficiency testing extend from the administrative to the curricular: the criteria used to evaluate proficiency are imported back into the classroom to "aid teachers to focus upon more pragmatic objectives and strategies ... with global communication goals in mind". But it is one thing to have a proficiency test, like a universal IQ test, for the purposes of "public relations" and "accountability", and quite another to form pedagogical objectives from it. As Brown tells the story, following the initial enthusiasm, "a significant backlash" occurred (1992:3). One of the most serious objections to the proficiency testing movement was precisely this move to formulate curriculum design and pedagogy on the basis of a testing procedure. We have seen (in 2.1) the effects of a quite parallel move in the conduct of the "Direct Method" in the 1920s in New South Wales. Beyond the general imperative to learn the lessons of history, the objections to proficiency testing are based on serious methodological and theoretical research in second language acquisition. We quote Brown again:

> Then there is the question of speaking proficiency itself. What is it? There is certainly no definition that has been accepted in the profession, and among some there is doubt that it can be reductively expressed with one type of measure, or what skills it represents at each level of learning (Chastain 49)[22]. Proficiency may indeed be person-specific and context-specific. Like IQ, the more we learn about it, the less we can neatly encapsulate it (1992:5).

Further questions can be put:

> do the language competences described in the *Guidelines* reflect the learning process; that is, do people learn the skills in the same order that the *Guidelines* say they do, in order to progress up the scale? [...] [23].
>
> Some research suggests that our learning of language structures does not at all parallel the textbook order, from simple to complex, that received wisdom says it should; and that sequence of mastery may be situation- and learner-specific, and even

> varying as to first language experiences and the comparative or contrastive nature of the second language.
>
> If this is even partly so, how then can we declare that a single flesh-and-blood 2 or Advanced actually exists in this world, other than as a conceptual construct? Even if the *Guidelines* were based upon statistical evidence, which they were not, any researcher could have told them not to use the data prescriptively on individuals. (Brown 1992:5, quoting Lantolf and Frawley 1985:339-40)

"Learning" is not "being testable", and the dangers of conflating one with the other are well understood in general educational theory. Valid testing procedures evaluate the outcome of particular learning experiences with particular groups of learners. The conclusion we draw is that, if standardised proficiency testing has a role in "public relations" and the formulation of criteria for employment, then this role should be kept rigorously distinct from the aims and objectives of teaching programs. There is no reason against administering a standard test in the same way as the NAATI tests, that is, as publicly available examinations that candidates can sit for at will, for the purposes of certification as "proficient in (some) LOTE". The accountability question should be met in some other way; for the accountability of universities is surely above all an accountability to educate, a function quite distinct from the provision of standardised certification.

On the assumption that the move towards proficiency testing is part of a broader move known as the "competency movement", it is useful to draw the parallel between our argument and the timely warnings of Fay Gale regarding this latter (Gale 1992). Arguing that "It is in the variable, unpredictable, creative, non-definable, non-quantifiable arena that humans cannot be replaced", Gale expresses the concern that it is these qualities that are overlooked by the competency movement. Likewise, notwithstanding its stress on "communicative competency", Brown (1992:10) argues that the proficiency "thresholds" on which proficiency testing depends focus on the ability to "sustain" (or not) "grammatical structures" in the main, and are unable to measure the "social adeptness and understanding" that effective communication requires. Gale's argument extends to the administrative costs of the movement, a cost "inevitably" incurred on the assumption that "the skilled labour that is now proposed will be needed by 2001". But,

> ... there is a great danger that the competency goals are not based on real knowledge of future needs. [...] However, in the future, will we need the particular skilled workforce that the entire competency skills formation rationale is predicated on?

Gale fears that the competency movement "will defeat the actual goal, which is to achieve greater flexibility" by training people in narrowly defined skills that may be out of date within a decade or less, and she warns against the temptation to "allow the requirements for specific skills or competencies to control the aims of education". Like Brown, she is sympathetic to the aims of the movement, but like him, is concerned that those aims cannot be achieved by the means proposed: the more proficiency guidelines are used as criteria within classroom practice and curriculum design, the more questionable their utility, failing both to do the job which

they can realistically claim to do, and the pedagogue's work, which they cannot (Brown 1992:13).

A further objection to proficiency testing is that standardised criteria can only measure with any accuracy what candidates *cannot do;* they are very blunt instruments indeed for measuring positive competence, particularly in an area such as language in which, as Brown states it, we cannot define reductively what proficiency is, and in which the skills are extremely heterogeneous. It seems that proficiency testing has retrieved - against its best and most explicit intentions - a notion of "mastery" that is based on a nostalgia for quantitative criteria.

> Implied in the *Guidelines* is that the status enjoyed by the hypothetical native speaker who listens and sits in judgment of the learner/speaker at lower levels of proficiency, is also the purported goal of the person being rated if he or she has approached the upper reaches of language skill. The *summum bonum* of the increasingly proficient speaker, it is assumed, is to perform as though he or she were a native speaker, in effect to become a facsimile of the native. (1992:9)

If mastery of a language is identified with one, single peak of native-like general proficiency, something vital is lost: the remarkable openness of a language, and the fact that it can always be used to say things in unpredicted ways. There is in fact no need for teachers and assessors to be preoccupied with measuring the inevitable shortfall with respect to an abstract ideal. In the most traditional French curricula of Australian universities, this lofty aim, and the programmed failure to achieve it, were in fact established in exactly the same way. The original sin of young Australian learners lay in their not being native speakers of French, and their long struggle towards the summit was doomed to fail in all but a handful of cases. In that traditional learning context, things were simple enough in principle, if eminently difficult in practice. Students did not need to develop the capacity to function in a wide range of situations and registers: it was just a matter of being able to talk to, and talk like, a French professor of literature. What characterises the current situation, however, even when - precisely when - the aims are not stated with clarity, is the need to be adaptable. It is not a matter of replacing the model of the native-speaker literature professor with the native-speaker business person: students know, in the best cases, that they are trying to make the language work for them. To put it carefully, they are learning both to do things *they* want with the language, and to understand what kinds of wanting are best suited to the language performance to which they now have access. In other words, they are learning to conceive of new aims as they progress. And these aims are local, circumstantial ones, not distant peaks of icy perfection.

If, as we have suggested, generalised proficiency testing is allowed to dictate an "aim" for language teaching, it is likely to be a recipe for the systematic definition-and-measurement of failure. Where specified professional language skills are required, as they are eventually likely to be in so many areas, those skills can be tested, and be the subject of professional certifications. Meanwhile, French teachers will need to go on teaching students, at various times and in various places, to understand rap music,

read Voltaire, write a job application, or invent a parody of a television commercial.

It has to be accepted that a generalised proficiency test cannot serve its ostensible purpose, for the simple reason that there is no such thing as generalised language proficiency or mastery. Brown (1992:12) suggests that employers should equip themselves to test prospective employees for language skills that are relevant to their particular professional field. Yet if that were to be done, it might seem to many educationalists that they were at the mercy of market forces, with nothing left to serve within the education systems as a reliable standard. The cruel fact is that this is already the case, in a sense, but that it need not be a source of anguish or a threat to professionalism. A better, more modern formulation of the question of "standards" would be: how can teachers hope to reconcile the necessary diversity of curricular aims and skills with the need to provide some demonstration of achievement? How are teachers to be held accountable to parents, to government, and to the students themselves? This question is a reformulation of Leal's expressed concern, although not in the clear, general terms that would respond most directly to his call for a renewed public relations effort on the part of LOTE professionals.

In practice, there is ample opportunity for university language departments to "display their wares" (Leal 1991:I,76) by pointing to concrete evidence of learning achievements in French. Whereas ten years ago, third-year students of French at university tended to have difficulty following a lecture in French, let alone participating in discussion of it, it is now the norm for post-HSC classrooms throughout the country to function communicatively in the target language. Policy-makers who themselves received some formal training in French in the past would no doubt be astonished if they were given the opportunity to observe the routine language achievements of today's students. Even those who are graduates of only five years' standing, on occasions when they come into contact with current classes, are struck by the extra demands now being made on students, and by the students' capacity to respond. It is not, of course, historically "fair" that students whose aural-oral work in 1985 would have passed with distinction should now achieve a bare pass, but that is the usual price of progress.

In an attempt to characterise non-reductively the range and quality of current student achievements in learning French, we list here, in rather motley form, some events which have recently been witnessed by the authors:

- six-year-olds in a particular program are able to do mathematics in French without translation.
- year eleven students who have done some late partial immersion can take part in analytical discussions at normal speed in French about cultural differences between Australia and French-speaking countries.
- undergraduate students at university, as a matter of course, study the French press in detail, and are able to watch live television without subtitles, including news, talk shows, and films.

- second-year university students can be called upon in an emergency to act as liaison interpreters for a visiting trade delegation, without ever having done business French.
- advanced undergraduates who have done a short course in New Caledonia can do a live-to-air broadcast in French, on ethnic radio, about their experiences.

The responsibility of French (and other LOTE) teachers is surely to bring such achievements to the attention of policy-makers and the general public, rather than hold up the ideal of general mastery. In that sense, the state MLTA which organises a primary LOTE eisteddfod, allowing very young students to perform in public, is responding to the need for accountability without sacrificing its teacherly concerns. The "aim" of those who organise such public events is presumably to give all involved, performers and spectators, a sense of achievement.

These are some ways in which Leal's concerns with the level of public ignorance concerning language competence, the activities of language teaching professionals, and the realistic goals of a teaching program in languages can be addressed. It is our view that they are not adequately addressed by stating "aims", since the capacity to understand those aims itself depends on understanding the processes of their attainment. It is clear that the best way for people to understand the possibilities and objectives of a program, say, in French is to have been through the processes of acquisition of some LOTE. If this is so, the effective education of the Australian population in this matter will take a generation, on condition that that generation has available to it the experience of LOTE learning generated by the implementation of far-sighted languages-in-education policies. This is not a counsel of despair, if we count an educational generation (as distinct from a reproductive one) as the process that leads a student from year 8, through university, back into the teaching profession: that individual will have attained basic responsibility for the subject within 10 years, and relatively senior responsibility within 15. With a systematic focus on specific forms of achievement, and the systematic building of strategies of reflection on the nature of language, the structure of the particular language, and the processes of acquisition, into the language-learning processes themselves[24], teachers have a key role to play in propagating an enlightened understanding of LOTE acquisition and competence among the general public. And it must be said that an equally key role is to be played over a slightly longer time frame by the parents of school-age LOTE learners who themselves will have participated in achievements such as the ones we have listed.

The particular situation of French within this highly contested area of the aims and objectives of a language teaching program is again partly produced by its long history, and the place of currently practising language teachers within this history. Caught between the "traditional" curriculum and the communicatively-based one, on the one hand, and between an assumption of the finite vs. the open set of knowledges constituting competence in a language on the other, the aims of French departments in the nation's universities are perhaps more deeply fraught, and more apparently confused, than those of departments of other languages. They have also been in the vanguard of other curricular developments that have deeply

modified the aims of the humanities in general (as an indication of this, one has only to read the proper names sprinkled through the essays and the footnotes of Ruthven 1992). In departments of many languages, there has been a widespread shift away from the "great monuments attitude to culture" towards "culture as outlook and lifestyle" (Brown 1992:4) in line with the adoption of communicative methodologies. Beyond this, research in France over the past 20 years has addressed the nature of the nexus of language and culture, and has investigated the nature of cultural practices, the place of the "language" in the strict sense amongst other "languages" of communication and symbolic exchange (Freadman 1989, 1991). Evident in all our interviews with colleagues from French departments throughout Australia is a concerted attempt to reformulate the relation of "language" to the "culture" courses. In most departments, partly as a result of following the logic of the communicative approach, colleagues claim to be attacking the boundary between the programs of learning in "language" and "culture", although courses bearing those names are frequently kept separate for administrative reasons. The Monash department describes its tactics as a "policy of mutual invasion": on the "literature side" of the first year course, reading comprehension skills in a variety of registers are taught, whereas on the "language side", the course is structured by socio-cultural themes. The aim is for "greater integration" of the materials, but the course has two distinctly named components. While students cannot enrol in only one of these, the distinction is maintained, we were told, to draw attention to the variety of skills and knowledges involved in learning French. Students work in different groups for each component, and with different teachers, partly because the teachers themselves are specialised. The Queensland department states its overall aim as an understanding of the language/culture nexus itself, refusing any claim to achieve total integration on two grounds: (i) this supposes an identity of "language" and "culture" which is not supported by experience. There is much regional differentiation within metropolitan France, and, given the widespread use of French in post- and current colonial settings, well outside of the cultural bounds of "France". The claim to integrate language and culture perfectly is also contested in terms of the broader semiotics of culture, which cannot be captured by studying the language *stricto sensu* in isolation from other semiotic practices. (ii) the aim of total integration overlooks the specificity of pedagogical objectives, and hence, of classroom strategies: to teach the French press, for example, is quite a different matter from teaching French from press sources, although the two could be conducted in tandem. (These are quite practical considerations: techniques such as reutilisation, comprehension, transformations of texts, etc., typical of language teaching, simply interfere with work on discursivity and ideology, typical of studies of the press. The same is true in reverse.) The specialisation of teachers is quite clearly one of the impediments to genuine, non-reductive integration of the curriculum. As universities at large accept to treat teaching competence on a par with research attainments in their appointments policies, so will language departments be forced to consider teaching ability across the curriculum as a requirement on their staff. The fact that most members of French departments at present are either "culture" teachers doing as best they can with language courses, or "language teachers" whose cultural ambitions are limited to inserting "cultural content" into the language syllabus, derives directly from the massive changes in the institutional status of French that we alluded to earlier: specialisation is a possibility only in very large departments, and an impossibility in small ones. Staff

who were appointed as specialists into flourishing departments and are now teaching in departments less than half the size, are clearly ill-equipped to do all the jobs required of them. It has clearly become necessary for all teachers in French departments to have a more than summary understanding of the issues and practices of language teaching. As we see the evolution of French departments into the next century, we hope that training and appointment practices will make the division of labour between language and culture teachers a thing of the past. While individuals will have their specialised research areas, certainly, and while the courses will be integrated or not, and in particular ways, according to the philosophy of each department, it is clear that the putative "boundary" between language and culture is exactly the point where the most innovative work in French departments will be done: teachers will no longer count as competent on the basis of a short-lived, and long out-dated "right" to treat as irrelevant to their own pedagogical goals and practices the work in the classroom next-door.

The history of the changes in the curriculum over the past twenty years shows that two debates, at least, have been more or less resolved within the profession. One is the hesitation over whether, or not, to teach all courses in the target language: most departments now do so. The other is the tension between "literature" courses - standardly, close study of a few selected great works - and "civilisation" courses - these latter widely introduced into the curriculum in the 1950s, as a method of "quick" coverage to supplement the gaps of this selection. In many departments, the survey course is now out of favour, the literature course has taken a multitude of different forms, and there is a flourishing sub-discipline of "culture studies" that has attempted over the years to find a rationale, and give intellectual substance to, an area of the curriculum that was notoriously ill-defined (Cryle 1992). The debate we can see emerging for French in the 1990s is of a quite different order: there are two directions for French, corresponding to two quite separate rationales for the "place" of French in an arts degree. One is European studies, an option that is envisaged for La Trobe, where the merger of all the European languages offered at the university is under active consideration. Here, and also at the University of New South Wales, "European Studies" is seen both as a useful direction for French to go in, and as a threat to each department's strength, its capacity to teach the whole curriculum in French. At Monash, where many of the advanced literature and theory courses are not taught in French, the European Studies Major does not conflict with the department's preferred identity. This sort of conflict of objectives arises whenever interdisciplinary options are considered, for example, literary theory and semiotics at Queensland, where there are plans to cooperate with the English department. On the other hand, one of the major new initiatives introduced into many departments during the past twenty years has been "francophone" studies. There is clearly no conflict here between the objectives of these options, and the general aim of teaching French, although, for the sake of hypothesis, "post-colonial" literary studies might well "go comparative", preferring, for example, to include both French and English Canadian writing in the one course, rather than maintain the linguistic separatisms of each of the empires. Does "French" go with "Europe" or with the post-colonial internationalism of the language? Clearly one would not wish to exclude *a priori* one or the other of these two policy directions, and combined majors would seem to be the answer. As in the case of combined degrees across faculty boundaries, the future for French

lies not in its strength in isolation, but in its capacity to cooperate with a range of other disciplines. We urge that faculty and university administrative procedures and structures be made more flexible, so as to encourage the connection between French and the range of other areas with which it can fruitfully be associated.

So much for the place of French in the arts degree, where course structures based on 19th century nationalisms are at last giving way to internationalist and cross-cultural problematics. But what of the place of French in other degree structures?

> Combined with other vocational skills, language knowledge can improve employability. However, there have been relatively few attempts to integrate language study with other vocational training or to develop vocationally relevant language courses. Yet the vocational relevance of languages is an increasingly important motivator for language study. Apart from careers in interpreting, translating or language teaching, knowledge of or proficiency in a language other than English in Australia is useful in many professions. Internationally oriented careers span science, technology, information technology, public sector careers in defence, foreign affairs, trade and immigration, and marketing and liaison for all export industries. [etc.] (*DEET* 1992:II,62)

It will be our task in the next section to outline some of the "relatively few attempts to integrate language study with other vocational training" in the specific field of university programs in French. In his section of "General Objectives" (10.4), Leal distinguishes "four overall objectives" as "linguistic", "academic", "vocational", and "service". and shows that "concern for these four objectives is not very evenly distributed across departments" (1991:I,79 and throughout). This classification is traditionally accepted in French departments in Australia, and has in large measure to do with the objectives of the traditional curriculum. Hence, the widespread misgivings expressed concerning "service courses" - "(e.g. Business French)" (1991:I,83) - and the fact that "many staff in language departments are concerned lest the pendulum should swing too far away from the traditional cultural orientation of language courses towards an orientation which has variously been described as "instrumental" [...], "training" [...], "language in isolation" [...], "utilitarian" [...], or "foreign language as a tool" (1991:I,81). We endorse Leal's view "that the time has come to recognise the legitimacy of appropriately designed service language courses" (1991:I,81), and that "higher education should offer modern languages which address diverse objectives" (1991:I,81). However, we do not share the view of language and culture according to which these categories appear natural or incontestable. Subscribing to a largely socio-linguistic view as outlined above, we rest our survey on a critique of the classification on which this part of Leal's report depends, and which informs the distinctions which organise his "Survey of Needs" (Part A). The fact is that it is only when we distinguish "academic" objectives, or "intellectual and cultural needs" from some other category, that "Business French", or French in Science and Technology, can be thought of as not intellectual, cultural, or academic. Under these circumstances, "service courses" are indeed the poor cousin, if not the village idiot, and "language as a tool" is ethically and

aesthetically diminished as "utilitarian", by contrast with the disinterested ideals of art and the spirit. If language is *not* a "tool", we are at a loss to understand why we would need it, let alone why we would need two - or several! - of them. (Nothing could speak so clearly the objectives of the "traditional" curriculum than this fear of giving language the status of a tool. Taught as an *object* of admiration, if not awe, and accordingly kept at a distance from the demands of everyday intercourse, the French curriculum of the decades following the Second World War was designed for objectives that contested at every point the useability of the language beyond the special domain within which it was conceived. It would seem that despite its explicit rationale, the purposes of the "direct method" perpetrated those of the "indirect method" that it had superseded, in which book-learning, and a certain notion of a humanities education, were paramount.) The learning of French - of LOTEs in general - is no longer confined to a place within the "humanities": it is one of the crucial interfaces of the humanities with other domains. We reiterate: insofar as all such activities as science, business, and the public service are cultural practices just as is the critical knowledge of the arts, they are specialised domains in which social adeptness and cultural understanding join with language competency, each in its specific way. As such, they are deserving of the best in critical cultural awareness that language departments are in a unique position to offer. Study of them, as courses for undergraduates, is no more, or less, "academic" or "intellectual" than we choose to make it.

2.3.1.4 French in Specialist Professional Training

2.3.1.5 Possible Models

There are three models for the design of courses in this area. The first is a language course offered to students enrolled in a wide range of vocational training courses, from Nursing to Engineering and Business, as a structural, but minor component of their degree. Under the old binary system of post-secondary education, this model included the three-year teacher-training qualification, which subsists redesigned as a four-year degree in some of the newer universities. The second is the addition of a diploma course end-on to a degree course, normally the BA, as in the familiar university teacher-training model. This model is sometimes extended to post-graduate specialist diplomas or course-work masters degrees. The third model is the combined degree, always possible, for example in the combination of law and arts, but rarely until recently a structure for systematic professional training in languages for vocational purposes. All three models are represented in the professional areas in which French has a presence: business, engineering, interpreting and translating, and teaching. We shall consider them in this order.

Before doing so, however, it is of some interest to select for special attention those institutions that have recently changed their status, from "Institutes of Technology" or "Colleges of Advanced Education" to universities. Because of the radical restructuring of the degrees, indeed, of the missions, of such

institutions, it is there that we may expect to find the opportunity for significant developments in the field of vocationally oriented LOTE teaching. In the two that we shall take as exemplary, the University of South Australia and the Queensland University of Technology, French has been established for many years. They offer an interesting contrast.

In the U of SA, French is located in the School of Education. It is available as an option in the compulsory "liberal arts" components of all degrees. Anne Martin, Head of the School of Education, told us that initially, French was the preferred option for humanities students only, but that now there are enquiries from business, engineering, and interior design students. It had for some time an "image" problem, being contrasted with German as "arty" as distinct from "practical". However, as elsewhere in Australia, the multi-cultural composition of the clientele has modified these prejudices, and there is, for example, significant interest in French among the Vietnamese students, whatever their vocational choices. There is a particular difficulty in designing the course for students from a diversity of faculties; not only do they enrol with a range of previous experience and abilities, but there are time-tabling problems. There are only 2 hours a week available to the French course, in one block, representing a great deal less than the standard university course at first year level. The U of SA is able to offer two streams on a regular basis, a beginners' stream, and a refresher course run every second year, but there is no further French study possible within the institution beyond this level, although students may enrol in courses at the University of Adelaide or at Flinders to continue if it is feasible for them. Martin reports that there has been an increase in enrolments in languages in recent years, and that French is holding its own, regularly attracting 15 to 20 students into the beginners' stream. With the change in the University, there is the possibility of redefining the role of languages in the mission, but there are not enough staff or resources to do this.

At the Queensland University of Technology, French is offered in the structure of four degrees, BEd (Secondary), BEd (Primary), BA and B Business. In all of these, work is being done, and new regulations being put in place, to develop the language component towards achieving professional competence. The BEd (Secondary) currently requires only four units of French, but there is a proposal to consolidate the language base and require 6 units. BEd (Primary) only requires 3 units. A LOTE methods specialist is currently being appointed to the Education Faculty. BBus currently requires 4 units, but this may increase to 5 or 6, and a proposal is on the table that the business French course include a specialised workshop designed to meet the particular needs of these students. The BA with a major in European Studies includes 5 units of French. From 1993, it will be compulsory for all students of French enrolled in BA or BEd to participate in an intensive course in Noumea, comprising 20 hours tuition per week and a family stay, over 4 weeks. The same effort to raise the standard of language competence can be seen in the rule, also to be introduced for 1993, that any student starting at beginners' level should participate in a 4 week intensive course after his/her first 2 units, in order to qualify for entry into second year. At the end of the 3rd year, a non-compulsory course in France will be offered; this will add the equivalent of 2 units to the students' qualifications, and will be intensive over 8 weeks.

2.3.1.6 Business

Courses in French for business purposes are offered in three universities: Monash, at both the Clayton and the Frankston campuses, James Cook, and QUT.

At Monash/Clayton, Business French is a combined second and third year subject within the post-secondary stream that can be counted as part of a major or a minor sequence in the framework of three double or combined degrees: BA/BEng, BA/BCom, BA/BBus. Material covered includes: "areas of business communications such as telephone skills, telex writing, business letter writing and report writing". It is assessed on the basis of practical tasks connected with these, and the lecture material includes information concerning company structure, intercultural communication, French economic structures and France in the European Community (departmental brochure). The course attracts around 20 students every two years.

The Monash/Frankston course is more elaborate, but does not rely on secondary French as a basis. Its prerequisites are Introductory French 1a and 1b. It is part of the BA in International Trade: "The [first] subject [of the sequence] places the acquisition of language skills within a business context and introduces aspects of business practices in France and within the economic context of the European Community", and focuses on Australian trade with France (departmental brochure). There are four semester subjects in this sequence, which further develops students' ability to engage in "more complex tasks" over a greater range of business activity in France. The syllabus for the final unit of the sequence includes "employment and working conditions in France, criteria for French overseas investment and France's economic role within the European community" (departmental brochure).

This latter structure is not unlike the BA in International Business at QUT. In the full-time degree, students take four semester units over two years; in the part-time degree, these units are taken in years 3 and 4 (departmental brochure). Notice that the language component of the Monash/Frankston degree is longer by 2 units, since its prerequisites are two units of Introductory French, whereas the introductory course is included in the requirements for the QUT degree.

The James Cook degree is also based on some prior knowledge of French. Introduced in 1992, it is like the Monash/Clayton structure, but is directed at students who include French in their commerce degree, rather than at students enrolled for combined degrees. In its first year, it attracted 26 students, and the department aims to introduce a follow-up course at third year level in 1993. It is hoped that at least some of the students continuing into third year will aim higher, and the opportunity will be offered to them to sit for the external examination of the French Chamber of Commerce. This requires further preparation, and is considered a specialist qualification.

It is of some interest to consider the relation between this independent qualification and the courses available at universities. The French Chamber of Commerce and Industry offers courses in association with the Alliance Française of Sydney, leading to certification of the following three kinds: *"le certificat pratique du français commercial"*, *"le certificat de français du*

tourisme et de l'hôtellerie", and *"le diplôme supérieur du français des affaires."* An introductory course leads into the first two of these, while the third - the advanced diploma - "is designed for those who have attained competency in the French language" (FCCIA brochure). In discussions between the business French staff at QUT and the department at the University of Queensland, it was thought that the level attained by students graduating from QUT with Business French would not be adequate to that required for preparation for the Advanced Diploma. Plans are under active consideration to combine the resources of these two institutions to offer a specialised course at third year level, "so that the jump from the degree to the work for the diploma would not be too great". This implies a judgment that the Advanced Diploma offered by the FCCIA is effectively a post-graduate qualification, requiring close to a double major in French for success.

2.3.1.7 Engineering

Monash/Clayton is the only Australian university to offer a combined BA/BE (Chemical, Civil, Materials, or Mechanical Engineering) with a structured LOTE component. With respect to French, this can be studied either in the beginners' stream or in the post-secondary stream; students are encouraged to take the language for a full major, including Business French at 3rd year level, and Engineering French at 4th and 5th years. The total number of engineering students enrolled in the combined degree and taking languages as their major within it is divided over French, German, Indonesian, Japanese and Spanish, so the numbers in each language are not great. Because the degree was only introduced in 1990, the specialised courses in Engineering French in 4th and 5th years have not yet been offered, and it is not yet certain that enrolments will warrant their introduction.

Other institutions interested in this initiative can benefit from the impressive research with which its proponents have informed it, and seek inspiration from the exemplary forms of cooperation between the French and the Engineering staff. The rationale for the course, with information regarding French engineering, and its connection with Australia, is set out in "Languages and Engineering at Monash University with Special Reference to the Teaching of French for Special Purposes" (Holgate and Staddon 1990, in Blackman et al 1990: 87-99). Of particular interest is the report of a *Survey of Demand for Engineers with Skills in Languages other than English* (Holgate 1991), general findings of which are that the supply of graduates with appropriate language skills is slight in comparison with the "significant demand" registered by the organisations surveyed. The demand for French was strong in the third round of responses received, with a number of responses noting the usefulness of French in professional dealings in countries of the Middle East, South East Asia, and the Pacific, where it is widespread as a second language. This survey is reported in Holgate (forthcoming), where, together with a follow-up seminar, it is used as the basis for raising issues in language training for engineers.

There are two classes of use for French in engineering: one is employment in and liàison with French firms both in Australia and overseas; the other is technical translation. "Experience has shown that it is more effective to train engineers in the relevant language than to try to provide arts graduates

with some general knowledge of engineering" (Holgate and Staddon 1990:88). The cost of technical translation, and the lack of trained specialists to carry it out, were evident in the case of the RAAF purchase of the Mirage fighter and the technical manuals relating to the Airbus (1990: 88); these needs will grow "as the Scientific and Technical Agreement signed in October 1989 between France and Australia begins to take effect" (1990:88). Whether this level of specialist training can be achieved in the structure envisaged is yet to be determined. Some relation between this venture and post-graduate interpreting and translating courses may be indicated.

2.3.1.8 Interpreting/Translating

The survey of graduate career paths (see Section 2.3.2) turned up the following anecdote, told by a graduate in French who now works as a customs officer:

> I had to interpret (very slowly, as my French has deteriorated in speech) for a French person who owned a restaurant in Noumea. He had brought his resume to show to a colleague in Queensland. This had been seen as an attempt by him to obtain work whilst on a holiday visa, which is illegal. Luckily, with my help, the interview only took one hour, instead of about four if we'd gone through the interpreter service. If my French had been up to scratch, the whole process would have taken 15 minutes.

We note, first, the convenience of having someone on the spot (in the customs service!) who can be used instead of calling in the official interpreting service: this convenience does not translate into recruitment policy. This person also reports that s/he uses French on average about twice a week, for about an hour each time, when dealing with travellers arriving from France or New Caledonia. Secondly, in this story as in so many others, "having a bit of French" is deemed "good enough" for a highly delicate discursive interaction, notwithstanding the inadequacies reported by the person h'self. Thirdly, this graduate, who also sometimes "translates letters", has a straight major in French which, given the date of graduation, could have included no training in either translation or interpreting. There must be countless graduates in French in various types of employment and social positions, who accept formal or informal assignments such as these as bravely as our heroic customs officer. This situation has often been bewailed, and was the reason for the establishment of NAATI. It bespeaks a culture in which the claim to any competence in a language is counted so special - because so unusual - that no degrees of competence or types of specialisation are conceivable, let alone specifiable or imposable in criteria for employment. One would wish that organisations and services, such as customs, so close to international borders that interaction with a variety of foreign tongues would be taken for granted, would also take for granted the need to recruit language professionals as a matter of course. There is a need, evident to most graduates in French at least sometimes in their professional lives; but there is neither demand for, nor supply of graduates trained in the appropriate ways.

A survey of current patterns of training and employment in French interpreting and translating was reported in 1990 by Brownlie-Nguyen. The report found that French/English interpreting was not taught at any tertiary institution, and that a full translation course existed at only one university (1990:5). The university in question was in fact Edith Cowan, which continues to offer a postgraduate diploma in translation in distance mode. To date, the number of students awarded this diploma remains very small. Six other universities responded to the survey by saying that they included translation in their courses, but, as Brownlie-Nguyen points out, "translation is included in courses as a means of increasing students' awareness of the language, and for improving written French, and is not vocationally oriented" (1990:5). Some evidence emerged in the course of the survey to suggest that the highest qualified interpreters and translators (those at NAATI levels 4 and 5) were in fact those with the most regular work. Demand, as for other market-driven uses of French, appears to be strongest at the top of the range. Insofar as tertiary French "translation" courses merely use translation as a teaching method, they cannot be said to be articulating their courses with the demands of professional training.

◆ The University of Queensland has the only NAATI-accredited level 4 course for interpreting and translating in any language in Australia: a course-work master's degree in Japanese-English. Some steps have been taken to set up a parallel course in French, using the facilities of the Key Centre for Asian Languages and Studies, and sharing with the centre a core of professional subjects. Links have been established with the Ecole Supérieure des Interprètes et Traducteurs (Paris), which, in the academic year 1992-3, is providing training, both in professional skills and in teaching methods, to a potential future teacher at Queensland. ◆

2.3.1.9 Teaching

2.3.1.10 General issues

We were touched, and a little alarmed, by the following comment from a senior and highly respected French teacher in Victoria. Asked for her views on the effect on French teaching and learning of the new VCE study guide, she replied with some heat: "I hate it. How can I prepare my girls for their course at University with CATs (the inverted commas were audible) on ecology or some such thing?" For this teacher, the "university course" *could not possibly have changed* since she completed her studies: communicative methods, and the reformulation of curricular goals they imply and to some extent impose, are incommensurate with her view of her role in the broader purposes of French teaching. The clash between language study for the purposes of high culture, and language study for pragmatic or utilitarian purposes - i.e. between two views of "culture" - is manifest here, but beyond the pathos of generational conflict, the comment is indicative of one of the major issues confronting the teacher, and hence, the training of teachers, in

the present-day LOTE scene. Under the curriculum that we call, for the sake of convenience, "traditional", but that had its day from approximately 1935 to 1970 (see 2.1), and in particular, under the administrative arrangements that served this curriculum, the schools were involved in the same overall objectives as the universities: the secondary curriculum had the function of being the first step, or the grounding, for the further studies that aspired to mastery of literary French. In this model, masquerading as non-vocational, the BA degree in French was in sober fact a professional training for secondary teachers. This was not inappropriate, since it represented the field into which the teachers were to induct their pupils (for this argument in respect of literary education in general, see Hunter 1988). Beyond this, when the teaching diplomas were professionalised, pre-service trainees were deemed to need some educational theory, and some training in classroom practice. The method course, in whatever subject area, taught them how to transmit what they knew to the next generation.

Considered as a professional training, the major in French during the period of the mid-century was very successful, and the conditions for this success were exactly that there was such a precise dovetailing of the aims, and the methods of secondary and tertiary institutions, and hence, of the professional identity and competence of the teachers. As we have remarked in our introduction, it is misleading to assert the *failure* of this curriculum to produce communicative competence in French for the countless people who learnt under it: communicative competence was never its aim. Thousands of teachers trained under this system, and the very large majority of them were at least competent to meet its demands; many of them were a great deal more than that. But it is unsurprising that many of the older teachers still practising in secondary schools in Australia are now being challenged with demands that they are not equipped to meet. Under these circumstances, it is all too easy to use the categories we find in the comments reported by Leal to describe the curriculum in French - "cultural", "non-vocational" - to diagnose these teachers as *untrained*. While it is certainly true that that curriculum *no longer* counts as an adequate training for teachers, it is not the case that it never did.

This generational mis-match, another effect of the changes that have taken place across the board in LOTE education, specifically in French, helps to identify two major issues confronting the design of adequate teacher training. The first of these is whether it is primarily the business of the university departments, or the teacher training institutions, to provide the professional specialisations necessary to the next generation of French teachers; and the second is the issue of continuing professional development for practising teachers. Both these points have to do with the increasing specialisation and professionalisation of teaching in general, and of LOTE teaching in particular.

These issues are widely recognised amongst teacher trainers and the staff of the language departments, and are included in the object of a long-term enquiry into the supply and training of LOTE teachers conducted by Howard Nicholas, Helen Moore, Michael Clyne and Anne Pauwels for the NLLIA and AACLAME (*The National Enquiry into the Employment and Supply of Teachers of Languages other than English, 1993*. Without wishing to preempt its findings, let alone invent impressionistic accounts for topics which the specialised enquiry has investigated in detail, there are some

points regarding the specific situation of French which we feel able to discuss in general terms.

a It is no longer the case that the majority of graduates holding a BA with some French enter the teaching profession. The demand has fallen, and the range of other vocational possibilities for graduates with a competence in French has broadened. In the figures quoted earlier from Leal, it is striking how many of the students at third year level are studying for combined degrees. In the responses we collected to our survey of current employment for graduates from the Queensland University department, relatively few of our respondents are teaching, and only a very few of the others defined themselves as unemployed French teachers. On these indications, it would be a short-sighted policy for any department to invest all its efforts in the design of a curriculum specifically for the training of teachers. On the other hand, French method teachers from many of the Diploma of Education courses complained to us that the departments frequently do not offer linguistics, discourse theory, or methodology among their standard options, with the result that their graduates are relatively ill-equipped to practise - even to understand the premisses of - the new methods of language instruction. Clearly, the present structure of a BA major in the language, plus LOTE method in the diploma course, is no longer adequate to the needs of specialised professional training for LOTE teachers. What a teacher of French needs to know is no longer necessarily covered by the degree course (although it might be, under particular local circumstances), and cannot be covered in the space available to "method" in the present diploma course. Hence, the recent appearance, in centres in several states, of graduate diplomas in LOTE teaching, with components in methodology and theory of applied linguistics, to fill the gaps left by the basic teacher training structure. This is a welcome development, but since it is an optional post-graduate diploma, not always rewarded in the appropriate institutional ways, it cannot do the whole job. Basic training requires an overhaul involving a good deal of coordination between the university departments and the teacher training institutions. What is needed is a structure whose objectives are the formation of highly skilled and theoretically well-informed professionals to teach LOTE in the schools.

b It should *never have been the case* that a highly respected and highly skilled teacher "of the old school" felt hostile to the changes that had been occurring over many years in the theory of her profession for the simple reason that she did not know why they mattered and had never been involved in the research that had led to them; it should *never have been the case* that she - and, we fear, hundreds like her - felt adequately trained on the basis of qualifications twenty or thirty years old. The point is not the innate conservatism of one - or many - individual(s), but the structure of a profession that only now is recognising the need for career structures and institutional recognition and reward for the regular up-grading and up-dating of professional competence.

The issues that arise in any discussion of specialised LOTE teacher training are, then, the relation between language proficiency and methodological acumen, the relation between the academic departments and the teacher-

training departments, and the relation between pre-service training and on-going professional development. In all of these areas, a general industrial issue arises, which has to do with the structure of the teaching career and the appropriate rewards for achievement and expertise among teachers.

2.3.1.11 Language Proficiency

"Most secondary teachers of the mainstream 'traditional' languages, such as French, German or Indonesian, are Australian-born and educated" (Leal 1991:144). For this reason, the question that arises most insistently in discussions of teacher-training for French is that of the competence in the language of the classroom teacher. Until recently, it has been possible in many states to qualify as a secondary teacher of French with less than a major in the language. Thus, in Victoria, the qualification level for secondary LOTE teachers is currently 2 years of study in the LOTE, but a rule has been approved to take effect from 1995 that will require a major in the LOTE before entering a teacher education course. At Queensland University, the minimum prerequisite for entry into the DipEd course was raised in 1990, and is now the equivalent of one and a half majors, with the possibility of a waiver for a student with in-country experience. The rules vary from institution to institution (see Nicholas et al. 1993, Appendixes for details), and are not always standardised at state level for the purposes of registration. The expectation is that standards will be raised in the near future.

Commins and Mackay sum up the situation thus:

> In general, and in principle, LOTE teachers (primary and secondary) employed in state Education Departments have (sic) expected to have a degree with a language major, or to have a three-year tertiary qualification in the target language. In some states primary teachers are expected to have at least a two-year tertiary language qualification. All states indicated, however, that the reality is sometimes/often different; since teacher supply is low, teachers are often recruited without full qualifications. (Commins and Mackay 1992:36)

The last point requires qualification for the case of French, since, as pointed out by a spokesperson from the Victorian Ministry of Education, the supply of qualified French teachers is stronger than for many other LOTEs, and continues to outstrip demand. We have no firm data regarding the qualifications of currently practising French teachers, and none that translates formal qualifications into number of hours of study, lengths of periods spent in French-speaking countries, or availability of French-speaking interchange in Australia. There is, nevertheless, a great deal of anecdotal evidence suggesting, in the words of one French teachers' adviser, that "the average level of French among school teachers is quite seriously deficient". This is the outcome of a long period of lower formal requirements and a lack of attention to communicative competence at all levels of instruction, among other things.

Notice that the lower requirements date from the time when there were few beginners' courses taught in universities: "two years", or a "sub-major" or

"minor" presupposed under those circumstances four or five years of secondary study. It also dated from a time when syllabi were structured on sequences of grammatical topics: having covered the topics as a student, the teacher could hope adequately to cover the same topics with her or his classes. With the move towards communicative competence, two years at post-secondary level no longer counts as an adequate language skills base for a teacher. The case of students who have completed majors at university level, by starting in a beginners' stream, is more complex. While their communicative competence may be strong, their range of knowledge of the language is less so. Teacher trainers report that students in this category rarely demonstrate the level of proficiency needed for the classroom, and that this can only be developed during the diploma year on condition that there are language specialists available for their method work as well as for their language development needs. In some cases, diploma of education students are sent back to the academic departments for extra work when appropriate courses are available. In general, however, few students in this category choose to teach the language. Howard Nicholas told us in interview that of a sample of over 400 secondary teachers of French, only 16 had started to learn French as university students. Whether this continues to be the case is uncertain, and measures will need to be taken to ensure that both post-secondary, and tertiary starting graduates are equally proficient for the purposes of qualifying as language teachers.

For languages with a strong community base, where the community provides the majority of the teachers, the communicative competence of the classroom teacher is not in doubt. For French, where the community base is so small in most parts of the country as to count as non-existent, and where in most cases that community does not provide the teachers, many secondary teachers report a worrying lack of confidence in their use of their language for day-to-day purposes. Thus, Howard Nicholas told to us in interview that on a self-assessment questionnaire administered in the course of the research for the National Enquiry into the Employment and Supply of Teachers of LOTEs, a "significant proportion" of French teachers claimed not to be confident of their language skills (cf. Nicholas et al.1993: chapter 5). There is an important distinction between their lack of confidence, and some other assessment of their actual competence, but the confidence question arises when teachers have little opportunity to use the language outside of the teaching situation. This lack of confidence may well account for some of the resistance encountered among teachers of French in Victoria when the VCE study guides, based on communicative competence, were introduced. As Ian Adams said in interview, a teacher's capacity to teach to the new objectives does not only depend on the extent to which s/he has been trained in the appropriate discourse theory and methodology; it depends primarily on whether s/he has an appropriate mastery of communicative competence h'self. A teacher who has only ever learned classroom French will not be able to teach across the range of registers required by the study guides. The fact is that the more communicative, or functional-notional syllabi are accepted as the base of secondary programs in French, the more pressing this problem becomes. Teachers must be both competent and confident as speakers of the language. If not, the experience of the "direct method" may recur.

Besides the raising of standards for entry into teacher training courses for LOTE teachers, there are two standard responses to this problem. One is the demand that teachers have a mandatory period of in-country experience,

the other is the introduction of proficiency levels testing for teachers. We shall discuss these in turn.

Both students and teachers are wont to say, somewhat wistfully, that "there's nothing like being in France if you really want to learn the language". To some degree, this is an undoubted truth; but it may also be a worrying admission of defeat. No policy, whether regarding the students directly, or the training of their teachers, should be based on the assumption that we might as well give up classroom LOTE-teaching. What can be achieved in the classroom needs to be measured with some precision, and this measure will vary depending on the structure and content of the curriculum and its objectives, as well as on the competence of the teachers. Clearly, what students most often mean when they say that learning French does not teach them to speak it is that they have experienced a mismatch between the content of their classes, and their often ill-formulated but instinctive notion of what it is to be linguistically competent. Without wishing to overstate the claims of good communicative teaching, we suppose that it should at least provide a student with a major in the language with a varied range of register-sensitivity, the confidence to use it adaptively, and the linguistic awareness that provides a firm base for the unstructured learning that occurs in real situations. If this is the case, the function of in-country experience is to turn the "learner" into a "speaker" of the language; teachers who have continued to think of themselves as learners of the language they teach are those who register failures of confidence, and whose work with their own students is likely to be both cautious and inhibiting. It is of crucial importance that the teachers of French in this country be both competent and confident enough to use the language both in and outside the classroom as a genuine medium of communication in a wide variety of situations. That variety is frequently hard to come by for French in Australia. In-country experience is therefore a desideratum.

The opportunities for in-country experience for French teachers in Australia are as follows:

a Assistantships in France. "This scheme enables beginning teachers of French, both primary and secondary, to improve their language skills and teaching methodology by spending eight months in a French high school where they will be required to conduct conversation classes in English with small groups of students for 12 hours per week. There are 35 positions per annum." Applications are made through the Department of Employment, Education and Training.

b Assistantships, as above, in New Caledonia.

c Victorian teachers have the possibility of participating in a 1 week seminar on commercial French in Noumea. This has been possible since 1990, and funded (apparently) from Victorian Goverment money.

d Paris-Avignon programme: this is a five week course for more experienced teachers. The French Government gives scholarships to 20 participants. Applications are made through DEET.

e Noumea summer course: run with French Government sponsorship and some support from DEET, this is the famous "stage de Nouméa" - by now something of an institution for Australian French teachers; it has

been going for many years since it was started in the 1950s, partly as a result of Manuel Geiman's efforts. It is not unusual for the same teacher to attend several times. It involves 40 participants for a 3 week residential course held in January.

f 9 months scholarship in France: one of these scholarships is available in each state education department each year for study in France on French as a foreign language. Applicants must be experienced teachers of French intending to return to teach in Australia.

g a variation on the above, for 3 months.

h there is also an impressive teacher exchange programme for LOTE teachers in Victoria, but funding for this scheme is coming under strain and is being decreased by governments on both sides of the arrangement.

Concerning these schemes, two points should be made: firstly, we cannot expect the French government to take the responsibility for educating our French teachers. While there is some support from our own governments at both state and federal level, there is a need for systematic support, not only in the form of scholarships, but also in the form of paid and unpaid leave without loss of entitlements, and teacher replacement schemes. Queensland pays full salaries to teachers on nine-month scholarships, and Victoria has a systematic relief teacher scheme. Further, approaches could be made to the governments of other French-speaking countries for bi-lateral arrangements such as the Victorian exchange scheme. Again Queensland should be cited, as having initiated discussions with Canada for this purpose. An enrichment of the cultural base of teachers' knowledge of French would be a welcome outcome of such schemes. Secondly, the participation rate in some of these schemes is disappointing. As one senior teacher told us, "teachers are tired at the end of the year; they don't have that sort of money, and they do have families. Many of the possibilities offered presuppose single people with greater flexibility in their working lives than is enjoyed by most secondary teachers. Besides, until there is the systematic possibility of some career advancement in recognition of the upgrading of professional skills, such schemes cannot count as incentives in and of themselves". The applicability of these points varies from state to state. A further point should be made concerning funding, this time not involving governments, but the non-government schools: a senior French teacher from a prosperous private school told us that she had spent summer one year at the course on *Français langue étrangère* at the *Ecole Normale de Sèvres*. Her language proficiency, she told us, had improved considerably during the course, and she was alerted to a range of questions in methodology and language acquisition that she had not been familiar with before, and in which she now pursues an active interest as a result. The school had not contributed one cent to her expenses - either her travel, the course fees, or her daily living. It is our impression that this is frequently the case. By contrast, we know of cases where teachers from independent schools have received one year's paid leave for study in France. As we have shown, the independent schools are responsible for a large proportion of the French teaching in Australia; one would hope that they will follow the lead of far-sighted government policies, such as those in Queensland and Victoria, in this matter.

The policy question regarding in-country experience can be summed up as a debate between two positions: should in-country experience be mandatory, in which case it should be fully funded by the teaching employers, or should it be the object of incentives and professional rewards? The latter seems to be the more practical option. The 1987 AFMLTA Policy on Language Teaching and Learning in Australia recommends that:

> All teachers of languages must be required either by the end of their training programme or within their first five years of teaching to spend, in total, at least one academic year in a country where the target language and culture is the first or dominant language and culture. For teachers undertaking such a year, the year abroad must be credited as a year of teaching service for purposes of continuity of service and related entitlements. (Endicott 1992:74)

The arguments against such an absolute mandate are strong: should students whose personal and financial situations make such a trip impossible, thus be barred from the teaching profession? At the same time, if there is no official requirement, and only pious hopes that teachers will go, there is no guarantee that they will. A more moderate position is recommended in the Leal report, Recommendation 33 (1991: II,180): "Teacher employing authorities and the Commonwealth Government [should] facilitate in-country residence for all teachers, prospective teachers and other (prospective) professional users of languages other than English by encouraging applications for assistantships, scholarships, exhanges and vacation refresher courses." Endicott agrees:

> Because of equity issues, 'required' should be changed to 'strongly encouraged', as a year overseas may not be possible for all LOTE teachers/trainees.
>
> If the time in-country is credited towards teaching service, there should be some definition as to what that year should contain, e.g. attachment to a school or tertiary institution, participation in language courses etc.
>
> Incentives and assistance are necessary. (Endicott 1992:74)

What practical measures could be taken to 'encourage' teachers to spend a year in professional service in a French-speaking country? In this discussion, it is important to remember, in the light of our earlier advocacy of *la francophonie*, that in-country for a French teacher does not automatically mean in France. A course in New Caledonia should not be seen as a poor person's substitute for course in France, but as an opportunity to further our understanding of the use of French in the southern Pacific.

Whether in metropolitan France, or in another French-speaking country, however, the practical difficulties presented by including in-country experience in the formal qualification requirements on secondary teachers are considerable. It is not feasible to make it mandatory for registration; rather, it is preferable to institute a policy of encouraging teachers to undertake in-service courses in French-speaking countries by relating them to mechanisms of further professional advancement. If this is not done, the effect that having a year out of the system can have on the teacher in terms of "continuity of service and related entitlements" is more likely to be a

discouragement. Different state education systems have different policies on this matter, as they do on the related question of financial support. As examples of the variety, we note that different state departments select differently within the range of possible programs: the Victorian Ministry of Education allocates $85 to scholarship holders participating in the Paris-Avignon programme. In 1992 this was to be supplemented by a total sum of $2,000, from the AFTV, to be distributed amongst participating Victorian members of the association. By contrast, the salaries of teachers on longer programmes are maintained to the extent of 100% in Queensland, and to 50% in NSW. Under the new policy to increase qualification levels in Victoria, the Victorian ministry supplies release teachers to replace those participating in in-service courses on LOTE method, and pays the cost of the course, of travel, and of accommodation. It will be important for any LOTE policy in Australia to be able to rely on a more standardised set of expectations and support mechanisms across the various systems. As a contribution to this at a level appropriate to federal government action, we recall Leal, recommendation 34, which we endorse: "The Commonwealth Government [should] allow for taxation purposes the reasonable costs incurred on overseas visits/excursions by language teachers to a country where the language(s) taught are spoken". (1991:I,xii)

Whereas the encouragement to engage in in-country experience is a direct contribution to the communicative competence of individual teachers, the proposal to make teachers submit to proficiency testing before registration, or require the attainment of a minimum skills level for serving teachers is a use of testing for the purposes of accountability rather than skills enhancement. We have already discussed the limitations of proficiency testing in the design of curricula and the formulation of objectives at tertiary level. While some of the issues remain the same, there are certainly some arguments that we would support for the purposes of professional certification. Setting standards for teachers' language proficiency has been the topic of lively and sustained debate in Queensland, and we will refer in detail to this case as a way of outlining the issues. The discussion in Queensland is in many ways ahead of that in other states.

The discussion pivots around the proposal for a "minimum skills package" in which language proficiency would be one component only; this component, however, is the one that is usually specified first. The *AFMLTA Policy on Language Teaching and Learning in Australia* proposes that

> teachers of languages must have a minimum proficiency in the language appropriate to the level of the students and the nature of the courses being taught, but in any case not less than S:3, L:3,W:3, R:3 on the ASLPR. (quoted in Ingram 1992:17)

This coincides with the Queensland policy, on the grounds that

> the teacher at all levels must be able to use and present the language with a high degree of accuracy and appropriateness in a variety of situations and this flexibility is not reached before 3 on the ASLPR. (Ingram 1992:20)

Ingram is one of the principal proponents of the use of ASLPR for teacher assessment. Discussing his position, Commins and Mackay express some reservations in a careful assessment of the issues raised. These are:

a "As with all assessment, it is worth remarking that this involves matters of judgment and not numerical scores." (Commins and Mackay 1992:43). Failure to recognise this might be misleading; "a general proficiency description cannot be regarded, nor should it be accepted, as a definitive 'scientific' measurement of any given individual's language behaviour". (1992:57; quoted from Brindley 1986:22). There is some advantage in the use of "fuzzy composite standards", since "the imprecision inherent in a verbal description enables a competent assessor to make mental compensations and trade-offs in order to allow for intercorrelations among the criteria and for the multiplier effect of some criteria on others". (Sadler 1991:12, quoted in Commins and Mackay 1992:58)

b The ASLPR were developed for use in English as a second language, and the difference between "second language" and "foreign language" is significant. An example of the ASLPR for French has been developed, but "the suggested tasks will ... need to be modified to take into account the foreign language context and to be more culturally appropriate" (1992:47) in order for the rating scales to be useful for LOTEs.

c "The fact of the matter is that not enough is known about the true nature of language and its development; consequently no test to date is the definitive one". (Commins and Mackay 1992:58). The ASLPR must be taken seriously, but like any other assessment, their limitations must be carefully understood.

d The ASLPR guidelines presuppose a theory of language acquisition that separates the macroskills. "Since then there has been more recognition of the dependence of the macroskills on one another, more emphasis in whole texts (or genres), a move towards task-based learning ... " (Commins and Mackay 1992:60). The tasks for assessment purposes should be revised to reflect this.

One of the more awkward theoretical problems for the use of proficiency testing for assessing teachers' skills arises out of one of the least understood areas of the theory of language which provides the premisses for communicative teaching. Whether we call this theory "discourse linguistics", "socio-linguistics" or any of the variants on which functional-notional syllabi are based, it assumes situationally or context-specific uses of the language. One of the most precise criteria used in this kind of teaching is "appropriateness", and vocationally oriented or specialist professional language teaching has recently been able to design effective curricula in recognition of this criterion. A different variety of the language, or genre, is appropriate in different social groups and institutional settings, in relation with different subject-matters and to achieve particular purposes. Hence, communicative teaching develops its materials across a range of such context-specific uses, on the assumption that the ability to function in one does not necessarily indicate an ability to function in another. The question that arises for teacher training, and hence, for the assessment of the language proficiency of trainees or of serving teachers, is whether "teaching" is one such specific context. If so, proficiency in this variety of the LOTE would be a priority for the teacher, and would be relatively useless for the learner once that learner has emerged from the class-room. On

the other hand, if proficiency in the discourse of teaching is less important than proficiency in other uses, or genres, it should not be a criterion in the assessment of language proficiency. The question is clearly one of the *relation* of one variety, or genre, of language use, with others. Commins and Mackay put the problem in the following way:

> ... to what extent should foreign language *teaching* tasks be included in proficiency assessments of foreign language teachers? [...] The scale as it is, is suitable for general, non-specific registers: if it is totally adapted for foreign language *teachers* the focus on general, everyday proficiency is lost. [...] If ability to use the language in the classroom for pedagogic purposes is to be a domain for assessment, it may be better assessed in action in the classroom as part of assessing language teaching skills, not as part of general proficiency. (Commins and Mackay 1992:61)

Ingram has firm views on the matter:

> A critical issue in specifying the language proficiency of language teachers is whether it is general proficiency that is required or proficiency for teaching purposes. Any suggestion that it might be 'language for teaching purposes' that is specified and assessed suggests a serious misunderstanding of the purpose and practice of the classroom. On the one hand, there would seem to be a special register of the language used in the classroom for classroom management and undoubtedly the teacher needs to be proficient in this. However, the form of the language that is taught to the students is that form used in real life and not just that used in the classroom: education provides knowledge and skills for life and is itself only a part of life. Thus the target language for teachers and what they must be proficient in is the general or non-specialist register ... (Ingram 1992:21-22)

The issue as it emerges in both these accounts is whether classroom proficiency is part of "general" language proficiency; both seem reluctant to conclude that it is. Yet as Commins and Mackay point out elsewhere, the "amount and type of teacher talk" is a central aspect of teaching, and the LOTE teacher's capacity to adapt her/his skills in this regard to the target language must be an important criterion for the assessment of skills (Commins and Mackay 1992:40).

Ingram is of course correct in his concern that no teacher be counted as proficient in the target language if that proficiency is *confined* to classroom usage. But we take issue with his assumption that one genre is used exclusively of any other. The very essence of teaching, surely, is that classroom talk is a vehicle for the development of other kinds of relatively specialised discourse - for example, theoretical physics, or historical narrative, or games. The teacher must be proficient in classroom language in the LOTE in order to develop a range of other registers in that LOTE. Further, we take issue with the assumption, shared by both accounts, and explicit in Ingram's expression "*the* general or non-specialist register" as if there were an area (a "special" area?) of language use not subject to the generic differentiation that is the premiss for communicative teaching. Is

classroom discourse "special" in a way, for example that the discussion of pop-music or swap-cards is not? All communication is by nature *multi-generic*, with one genre taking charge of the rules of setting that determine the appropriateness of choices from other genres and their combinations (for a discussion of the range of issues connected with genre in the learning situation, see Reid 1987; for the argument sustaining this assertion, see Freadman in Reid 1987: 91-124 and Freadman and Macdonald 1992. The argument that "all communication is multi-generic" is derived from Bakhtin 1986). A teacher who is discursively proficient in the target language is one who uses classroom discourse effectively for promoting (a) proficiency in other discourses, (b) discursive flexibility, i.e. a capacity to move freely among a range of different genres, using each under appropriate conditions, (c) independence of the classroom talk when using other genres. Whatever instrument is used for the purposes of assessing teachers' skills, these skills at least must be measured.

2.3.1.12 Methodology

We group under this term a range of theoretical and practical issues needed specifically by the trained LOTE teacher: curriculum, theories of language acquisition, classroom practice, theories of discourse, etc., since their interdependence is crucial to the success of any learning outcomes.

The AFMLTA Policy on Language Teaching and Learning in Australia holds that

> Teachers of languages must have had a minimum of 120 hours of specialist training in language teaching methodology in pre-service programs or have completed the equivalent of a specialist graduate diploma in second language teaching. (Endicott 1992:73)

Reporting on a meeting of "stakeholders in Queensland LOTE Teacher Education" at which this policy was discussed, Endicott adds that the discussion added to this policy recommendation the rider that "A significant proportion of this training time should be spent in methodology sessions conducted in the target language" (1992:73). What this would mean in practice is that each institution offering teacher training would have to employ at least one methods specialist for each of the languages targeted in the relevant state policy, each well-versed in the full range of methodology issues. This is a tall order: "possible solutions might be:

1 specialization by universities;

2 inter-institutional sharing of lecturers". (Endicott 1992:73)

A helpful synthesis of current thinking on the requirements on LOTE teachers is given in Commins and Mackay:

> LOTE teachers are likely to be most effective when they are versed in current approaches to first (for background speakers) and second language teaching. Approaches to language teaching are currently strongly informed by psycholinguistics (both first and second language acquisition), by theories of instructed second language acquisition (e.g.

> Ellis 1990) and by classroom oriented research. [...] In addition, the *ALL Guidelines* emphasise the need for LOTE teachers to possess good curricular skills. Curricular skills include abilities in planning, in teaching strategies (based on clear principles of learning), selection and use of resources, assessment and evaluation. Action research skills will heighten the effectiveness of teaching. (Commins and Mackay 1992:40-41)

We might add to this list the observations of Margaret Gearon, who said in interview that students need some exposure to theories of language, of whatever persuasion, in order to understand both the premisses of the methodology they acquire in pre-service training, and to evaluate productively discussions of changes in methodology as they continue in service. The acquisition of a language should not preclude reflection on the nature of language. Some capacity to think reflectively about what kind of thing a language is is clearly more than a bonus, being necessary both to the teachers' own understanding of their practice, and to their students' understanding of the cognitive, social, and cultural issues opened up by linguistic awareness.

The list under "methodology" is not only long; it is a complex set. The recommended 120 hours of training in methodology hardly seems exaggerated, and may not be adequate. With the growing recognition of the complexity of specialised LOTE teaching, the question must be raised whether the current models of teacher training are the best we can come up with. We cannot repeat too often that without highly proficient, professionally specialised teachers, no LOTE policy can succeed.

Our general discussion of the problems of teacher training has foreshadowed the argument that methodology, in this broad sense, is falling between the two areas of responsibility defined by the academic language departments and the teacher training departments. This relationship was settled under the traditional curriculum and its objectives, and has become unsettled since then. In recognition of this fact, the draft recommendations on the adoption of the minimum skills package in Queensland include:

> 4 In university programs, language teaching methodology should be taught in language departments and curriculum methodology in the education faculty. (Board of Teacher Registration, Queensland 1992: 74)

In the same area of cooperation between the two kinds of departments, another problem that arises in LOTE teacher training is language maintenance. Ideally, the method component of any pre-service training course should be language specific, and conducted in the target language. In practice, this is out of the question. There are not (yet?) enough students training to teach any given LOTE in any institution to warrant this sort of resource allocation. Accordingly, the draft recommendations include:

> 5 the structure of university programs should be reconsidered, particularly with respect to maintenance of language proficiency throughout the full period of preservice education (particularly in the period of professional studies). (Board of Teacher Registration, Queensland 1992:75)

Whereas once we might have seen an unhelpful territorial rivalry between departments of education and language departments ("by what right do the language departments teach methodology?" asked one of the teacher trainers whom we interviewed), the desire for cooperation between them is both heartening and extremely difficult to effect in practice. Foreshadowed in this desire is a pattern of mutual demands: each department should provide what the other department needs and cannot provide within its own resources. The failure to accede to these demands would then produce an outcome close to disaster. When we envisage this possibility, the specialised four-year B.Ed. looks like an ideal solution.

Other recommendations concerning cooperation are:

8 University lecturers involved in preservice teacher education of LOTE teachers should be familiar with current school curriculum issues and teaching practices relating to LOTE.

10 Experience in a country where the target language is widely spoken should be one component of LOTE teacher preparation.

10 a Options for funding of in-country experience, including self-funding and scholarships, should be explored.

10b Universities should consider forming a consortium to promote cooperation in in-country programs and to facilitate the placement of students. (Board of Teacher Registration, Queensland 1992:75)

12 Additional university study in LOTEs (not necessarily as part of a degree program) should be available to maintain and upgrade proficiency. (Board of Teacher Registration, Queensland 1992:75)

In general, we support the thrust of these recommendations, since effective teacher training must depend on coordination between the different components of pre-service education. But we repeat that the language departments are now being called on to provide their language for a wide variety of vocational purposes. Coordination is only possible where institutional resources do not need to be dispersed over too great a range. At present, territorial rivalries between institutions, and the sovereignty of the States, conspire to maintain this dispersal. As we have pointed out, neither the language departments, nor the teacher training institutions, under the current arrangements, can take on the full responsibility for specialised LOTE teacher training. The language departments may or may not be equipped to teach methodology, the education faculties may or may not be able to provide LOTE specific training. It has come to our notice that the LOTE methods staff are in so many cases graduates in French, that many of their examples are given in that language, notwithstanding the variety of LOTEs in which their students are specialised.

We suggest that specialised LOTE teacher training is of such crucial importance in the development of a multi-lingual Australia that the NLLIA, together with DEET, be asked to explore the possibilities of establishing a specialised national institution for LOTE teachers, where the resources needed can be marshalled to provide both methodological training and language specialisation of the appropriate level. This institution should offer post-graduate certificates and degrees, over a minimum of two years on the basis of rigorous entry requirements, and should coordinate with

the state education authorities for the administration of practicum and issues of professional advancement.

The spirit of this suggestion concurs with the analysis offered by Nicholas et al. (1993) of the relations between State and Commonwealth Governments in educational policy (Nicholas et al. 1993: Chapter 2), but is alternative, or perhaps complementary, to the specific recommendations contained in their discussion of proposals for changes in teacher education (Nicholas et al.1993:2.1.3). We endorse Recommendations 2-4 of the *National Enquiry into the Employment and Supply of Teachers of LOTE*, in particular as they support "the recommendations of the NBEET report *(Teacher Education in Australia)* which make explicit the notion of a two stage, overall five year preservice teacher preparation program". (Nicholas et al. 1993:159)

2.3.1.13 In-service

Many of the issues in this area have been foreshadowed in the general discussion of linguistic and methodological competence for teachers. Here, only specific points will be raised.

The in-service issue is particularly acute at a time such as the present, in a discipline such as French, where the habits of a long tradition are being overturned by new research. As an example, with the introduction of the VCE, the Victorian Government has recognised the need for special workshops and in-service seminars for LOTE teachers, and the French advisers report that in that state, where the French teachers have such a lively and active organisation, there were people who came to these compulsory meetings that "nobody knew existed". However, in many states, the LOTE advisers now organise regular cluster or regional meetings - the South Australian experience is long-standing, and exemplary - in which the circulation of ideas, as well as mutual professional support, are the objectives. We would hope that such meetings would increase, and receive appropriate support at administrative level.

The question for us in this part of our report, however, is what part the universities do, can, or should play in the provision of professional development opportunities for teachers. The answer is that they may design courses for further qualifications, and that they may provide in-service seminars either through the language departments, or through university extension. We give some examples of each, (Note: this list is specific to French, and is supplementary to the details given in Nicholas et al (1993:Appendixes), it does not repeat the information listed therein.)

Further Qualifications:
The University of Adelaide (with input from Flinders and the CLTR) established in 1991 a Graduate Diploma for teachers of French, to run for the first time in 1992.

The Department of Romance Languages, University of Queensland has established a Post graduate diploma in Arts (French): commencing in 1992, this course was "aimed primarily at current or future teachers".

In Victoria, the Ministry of Education has made arrangements with the University of Melbourne, La Trobe, and the Bendigo campus of La Trobe (formerly the Bendigo CAE), to provide a four-week intensive course on method for retraining LOTE teachers. This course can count as one unit of a graduate diploma in these institutions. The ministry supplies release teachers, and funds the course, travel and accommodation costs of teachers participating.

In-Service seminars:
The French staff at Adelaide University offered a seminar for teachers in summer, 1992, attracting 12 enrolments.

The University of Queensland, in conjunction with the Languages and Cultures Unit of the Queensland Education Department, has run an intensive two-week course for teachers in Brisbane, in 1991, and two shorter ones in Roma, in 1991 and 1992. Total enrolments were about 35. Demand is high for these courses to be offered on a regular basis.

At the University of Melbourne, in 1991, the Horwood Language Centre ran a one-day seminar on *Initiation aux techniques théâtrales*, which attracted 25 teachers. The same year, it ran an in-service seminar for primary French teaching, again attracting 25 teachers.

Such initiatives are to be encouraged. Regular contact with teachers will ensure that university staff remain versed in the evolving curricular and pedagogical issues in schools, while the encouragement of a habit of regular attendance at in-service and professional development activities by teachers will contribute to their overall maintenance of linguistic and methodological competence. Consultation between teacher organisations, state departments, education faculties and language departments will ensure that such activities are appropriately designed and delivered, and supported at the administrative level, both in the schools, and with respect to the career advancement of the individual teachers.

2.3.1.14 Primary

Notwithstanding a widely held opinion that the level of language proficiency needed for primary LOTE teaching is less than that needed for secondary or tertiary teaching, it is the common experience of many French graduates that one of the hardest things for them to do is talk with children. Again, this problem is far more acute for languages with little community base in Australia, than for others. The problem is not only phonetic. While they have at their command the full syntactic complexity of their language, a restricted but exponentially increasing vocabulary, and equally, a restricted but already varied and growing register range, children of a linguistically competent age (3+) make no concessions. Adults should be adults, in the business both of interpreting *their* speech and providing them with constant teaching and explanation of further linguistic use. An adult who cannot do this, who is linguistically a child, is a very odd creature indeed, and although children adjust to this over time, and indeed enjoy the reversal of roles, this depends on an ongoing relationship, not always available. Transfer this problem into the primary school classroom: the

discursive registers for use with children of different ages, the classroom skills of primary teaching and their deployment in a second or foreign language, are highly specialised, and not automatically adapted from language competence acquired in a standard degree courses in French. Opinion is therefore growing, that the language proficiency requirements of primary LOTE teachers be increased, and that secondary teachers, even with well-developed skills in French, should retrain for primary work. With the increase in the numbers of French classes taught in primary schools, this is becoming urgent. Some French advisers fear that the policy initiatives in this area will be sabotaged if the primary LOTE teacher training issue is not addressed. Victoria is the only state, as far as we can determine, that tests teachers before registering them as primary LOTE teachers. This consists in a short written test, with a brief interview in the target language, administered by the primary accreditation panel.

◆ In 1991, the French Language Adviser in Victoria organized two in-service courses for primary teachers, with the participation of speakers from other states. There were 35 participants and 25 participants respectively. The Language Adviser deals with teachers from all three systems, being involved in many activities of the Association of French Teachers of Victoria. Having worked with high school teachers through the change to the VCE, it seems that the next job of the Language Adviser (whoever it might be) should be to turn attention to the primary sector. At present there is only one French adviser, but the principle of having a part-time adviser to work in primary schools has been accepted. The French Adviser is a member of the primary accreditation panel. ◆

2.3.1.15 Cultural Competence

One teacher trainer, who has not seen the inside of a French department for some time, and certainly not had the insights into the range of possibilities that have emerged in our survey of the curriculum, expressed the worry that, fluent though s/he may be, a North African speaker of French would not be "culturally proficient" for the purposes of French teaching in Australia. Asked to explain, it became clear that this person was thinking of culture in the monumental sense, and as the canon of metropolitan France. Alerted to the issue of other francophone cultures, he conceded the point: a Parisian might exhibit rank ignorance of Quebec culture. How then do we measure "cultural competence" for the purposes of school-teaching? And how do we articulate the "culture issue" with the objectives of communicative teaching?

We have discussed some of the parameters of the "culture" issue in our discussion of primary and secondary school materials in French (see Section 2.2.5). It is exceedingly complex. Brown (1992) argues that the question of cultural competence is one of the most thorny in the whole area of proficiency testing. There are, he points out, "dialects in cultural proficiency, as well as in semantics and phonology" (Brown, 1992:5), and he worries that:

> ... a "proficiency" test on culture [might] signal a return to the so-called "big-c" or great monuments attitude of culture to the detriment of culture as outlook and lifestyle. If not, how do you put the multiplicity of cultural skills onto a global but hierarchically absolute 0-5 scale? (Brown,1992:4)

Cultural knowledge is an important item in the Queensland discussions concerning "minimum skills". Ingram defines it as "the meaning" of the language (Ingram 1992:22). Teachers should have an integrated and coherent understanding of the target culture that is non-judgmental, as well as "favourable cross-cultural attitudes" (Ingram 1992:22-3). He does not recommend that these be assessed as discrete items (1992:28). Commins and Mackay break down the area of cultural competence into:

- awareness of and broad knowledge about the foreign culture
- command of the etiquette of the culture
- understanding the similarities and main differences between the target culture and other cultures
- understanding the values of the target culture
- understanding of the implications of ethnocentricity and stereotyping. (Commins and Mackay 1992:42)

They too are disinclined to assess cultural competence on a proficiency scale, recommending instead that "the above five areas could be ascertained in an interview with a native speaker" (Commins and Mackay 1992:46) as part of a "profile approach" (Commins and Mackay 1992:51).

The difficulty is that culture might end up being assessed as discrete items of knowledge about the culture, leading either to a return to the "monuments" approach, as Brown fears, or as a return to some form of stereotyping. In a colloquium on the issue of the teaching of cultures run by the Languages and Cultures Unit of the Queensland Department of Education in July 1992, there was some consensus concerning the need for all teaching in this area to focus on awareness of cultural relativity, including the relativity of the students' (and the teachers') own culture. The moment of awareness that apparent norms are not translatable or transposable, or that one does *not* understand and cannot predict the outcomes of a certain behaviour, is probably the key moment in understanding the nature of culture. Teachers need to be able to foster such moments, and to make them the basis for curiosity based enquiry among their students. They also need to be able to assess text-books, methods, and associated materials for their "cultural content".

2.3.2 Survey of Graduate Career Paths - University of Queensland

The following is a survey conducted in February 1992 of the career paths currently being followed by graduates in French from the University of Queensland over the past 11 years. It contains anecdotal evidence, useful for indicative purposes only, of the uses to which these graduates have or have not been able to put their training in French. The population surveyed does not include graduates who studied French for less than the major sequence, and is divided into three groups: graduates with majors, with double majors, and with honours.

The questionnaire was distributed to 244 graduates. Of the 112 who responded, 74 stated that they use or have used French in their professional lives. The professional use of French increased proportionally to the amount of French studied. Of the graduates who had completed a major in French, 52 use or have used their French professionally and 34 do not use or have not used their French professionally. For the respondents with double majors, this ratio increases with 12 out of 16 respondents with double majors stating they use or have used French professionally. The 4 respondents who had completed honours all stated that they use or have used French professionally.

The area of most frequent professional use was teaching, in a variety of contexts - secondary schools (14), primary schools (1), private tuition (2), other institutions (unspecified) (1). Research was the second most frequently occurring area of professional use of French, with 9 respondents - 4 "academics", 3 "students", 2 "research assistants" - stating they use French professionally at least once a month. This does not include graduates of French studying or researching in French. The 6 "academics"/"research assistants" work in computer science and the physical and geographical sciences. The "students" consisted of 1 MA student (English), 1 PhD student (Film), and 1 law student. French was also used professionally by a number of respondents in the following areas: "ethnic affairs"/migrant education (5), marketing/trade/sales (4), law (4), journalism (2), and the international travel industry (2). The other respondents who stated that they use or have used French in their professional lives were spread across disparate areas, and included the following: music teacher, medical practitioner, customs officer, psychologist, editor secretary, high school teacher of another discipline, etc.

Despite the frequent and widespread use of French professionally, knowledge of French was only very infrequently used as an employment criterion. Only 5 respondents who use or have used French professionally in areas other than teaching, and only 11 of the 14 secondary school teachers of French, were employed with knowledge of French as a criterion. No respondents stated that their knowledge of French had been taken into account in determining salaries. As the following case study illustrates, French is being used frequently in a wide variety of domains, but is almost universally not considered an employment criterion or a remunerable expertise.

> ◆ A graduate with a major in French who works as a Safety and Training Superintendent stated that s/he used French professionally on a regular basis for "[t]rading with French speaking countries and looking after overseas business guests". S/he used French for "translation of ... letters and documentation, attending international conferences, [and] developing export markets in French-speaking Pacific countries". French was not an employment criterion, although "my proficiency in French is widely recognized throughout my company". French was not taken into account in determining his/her salary, "however, my French language skills are recognized and requested up to Board level". ◆

This respondent's affirmation that his/her knowledge of French was "widely recognized" was something of an exception. The respondents, including 6 of the 19 employed with French as a criterion, consistently stated that their French language skills were not appropriately recognized, valued, exploited, or remunerated.

> ◆ A graduate with a major in French, Italian as a second language and who has studied German now works in a travel agency where s/he has "built up a good clientele" of French speakers. S/he writes "[a]s French is still a true international language I think it is of utmost importance for someone working in international travel to know/utilize the language if we are to be recognized as professionals [and] to compete with the international market. I think it is still appalling that the Australian travel/tourist industry does not recognize/value the importance of people like myself and utilize our experience/exploit it to their best interests. I would be the first to encourage a more specialised market for international travellers". ◆

> ◆ A graduate with a major in French and with a knowledge of Latin, German, Swedish, and Spanish now works as a Departmental secretary in a University. S/he states: "People who have never learnt a second language seem unaware of what is involved in, and the high level of skill required for translating and interpreting. They may request a translation of a single word or phrase, not recognizing the importance of context, or expect a complete, idiomatic translation in next to no time, at next to no cost, for example. Such a lack of appreciation of language skills is at least part of the reason, I believe, that no financial recognition is embodied in pay awards. It is an employer's good fortune if s/he has someone who can work efficiently in the second language for the same pay as someone who can't." ◆

It is consistent with the respondents' perceived undervaluing, by employers, of their language skills - indeed it is the other side of the same coin - that 4 respondents recounted having performed translation and/or interpreting tasks for which they considered their French was inadequate.

The usefulness in "more general ways" of knowledge of (a) second language(s) was stated by all but 2 of the 112 respondents, with 27 of them not elaborating on the point. The other respondents indicated the following general uses or benefits of knowledge of French and/or of (a) second language(s): travelling, (34); reading material (in French) ("literature", "magazines", "journals"), (19); interacting socially, (14); understanding films (in French), (10); understanding/appreciating other cultures and culture in general, (9); gaining satisfaction, fulfilment, confidence, life-skills, (8); corresponding, (6); understanding (French) words and phrases in English texts (films, general reading, news, music), (5); improving general knowledge, (4); learning other languages, (4); understanding English structure, grammar, vocabulary, etymology, (3); understanding "language" in general, (2); developing analytical skills, (2). Three respondents also referred to the usefulness of French as a *lingua franca*.

2.3.3 University Extension Courses

To report precisely on numbers of students enrolled in the various language institutes or centres of continuing education attached to Australian universities is a difficult, if not impossible task. Many of these institutions, when approached, respond that they do not keep enrolment figures, so that the hope of gaining an exact measure of the current state of affairs is a forlorn one. For the same reason, it is hard to develop a clear picture of historical trends, although some interesting data are available from particular institutions. Here, as with figures from the TAFE systems, it seems useful to concentrate attention on two things: the range of institutions involved, and any visible differences in the ways in which certain key LOTEs are offered.

According to our best information, gained with the help of Barbara Baker, co-author of the report on LOTEs in TAFE, extension programs in French are offered in 1992 by the following universities: ANU, Macquarie, UNSW, Newcastle, La Trobe, Melbourne, James Cook, Queensland, Adelaide, UWA. The UNE-based offering in TV open learning is a special case.

The lack of readily available enrolment figures for many of the institutions listed above is itself significant. It reflects the fact that language institutes are in general less constrained in their teaching activities, presumably because their courses are not generally held by the Universities to be of great academic significance. By the same token, however, university extension appears to be a commercially responsive area, in which course offerings are likely to be rapidly adjusted according to demand. It may therefore be instructive, for example, to compare French and Japanese enrolments, in those few cases where figures are available. Such a comparison has in fact been carried out for one institute, the UNSW Institute of Languages. Results of the study are presented by Waites in graphic form, in Blackman et al (1991:70). Waites shows that enrolments in French and Japanese were about equal at UNSWIL from 1985 through to 1987, with each increasing noticeably from year to year. Total enrolments for the two stood at about 600, with about 320 in Japanese, as against about 280 in French in 1987. In 1988, Japanese enrolments more than doubled, reaching about 740. Since then, the proportion of 3 to 1 in favour of Japanese has been maintained with Japanese enrolments steadily dropping back to their 1987 levels, and French falling well below that. This pattern, it must be said, corresponds to the most bleakly pessimistic prediction of LOTE policy-watchers in Australia: a short-lived boom for Japanese, followed by a general slump taking numbers back to earlier low levels, with a redistribution of the old student numbers along a wider, or perhaps a different, range of languages.

Yet there is a danger of over-generalising on the basis of the UNSWIL pattern. Macquarie's Continuing Education Program, for which 1988-1992 figures are available, shows none of the same fluctuations, with numbers in French and Japanese remaining steady throughout the last four years in the 250-300 range, French being slightly ahead throughout. This is incidentally, almost the same pattern, with the same level of enrolments, as UNSWIL during 1985-1987. There is a second reason to be wary of generalising from the UNSWIL case: European language enrolments in other systems in NSW have shown a tendency to be out of keeping with the rest of Australia. It may be

enlightening to look at one of the sets of enrolment figures available in fullest detail, that of the University of Queensland's Institute of Modern Languages. From 1985-1988, French enrolments at the UQIML were steady at slightly over 200 per annum. During that time, Japanese increased almost threefold, from 167 in 1985 to 445 in 1988. Since then, French has almost doubled, moving from 206 in 1988 to 372 in 1991. In the same period, Japanese has increased markedly, reaching 600 in 1989, and remaining stationary at that level since. Neither language has seen any drop in enrolments, and total numbers for the two now amount to almost 1000, i.e., 2.5 times as many as in 1985. This scenario of parallel expansion, whereby Japanese quickly gains a place of great prominence, while French and other languages first consolidate and then continue to expand, corresponds to the more optimistic model for LOTE development in Australia. The fact that this pattern coexists alongside UNSWIL's slump, and Macquarie's steady state shows how difficult it is to produce an overall picture.

The detailed figures made available by UQIML also make it possible to compare the ratio of student numbers across levels, for French and Japanese. For 1991, the figures are as follows:

	Elementary	Intermediate	Advanced	Total
French	182	156	34	372
Japanese	491	124	-	615

Table 86
French and Japanese enrolments at UQIML, 1991

As in the case of TAFE, there are marked differences between the two languages in this regard, with a much higher proportion of intermediate and advanced students for French than for Japanese. These differences may be the nett effect of quite diverse causes. One is undoubtedly that French has a much longer history in Queensland, and that there are more educated adults able to return to French at a level higher than elementary. That there may be other factors, however, is suggested by the fact that those students who have done elementary Japanese in such numbers since 1987 have not tended to proceed regularly to the intermediate level, and that numbers in advanced Japanese have actually decreased from 48 in 1989, to 24 in 1990, to 0 in 1991. In this well-run, market-sensitive language institute, there is some evidence that the great majority of students are either unable to proceed to advanced levels in Japanese, or are not interested in doing so.

Of the five courses offered[25] in first semester 1992 through the TV Open Learning Project, "French in Action", provided by UNE, has been by far the most successful in attracting enrolments. As at 27 April 1992, there were 1914 students enrolled in the course, slightly more than for all the other courses combined. Since that time, students have continued to purchase course materials, and it is estimated in an interim evaluation, prepared under the leadership of Assoc. Prof. Bruce Keepes, of Sydney University, that considerably more people are following the program without having purchased the accompanying print materials. Keepes' analysis of the data shows that about 50% of those enrolled in "French in Action" are aged over 50, an age profile comparable with that of other humanities subjects on offer (Australian Studies and Religion), whereas Marketing and Statistics have attracted a younger group on average. The percentage of males and females are 31 and 69 respectively, with a higher proportion of males than for

Australian studies (M:16%, F:84%). Marketing (M:51%, F:49%) and statistics (M:49%, F:51%) have a quite different gender distribution. In other words, students enrolled in French have much the same age and gender profile as students enrolled in other humanities subjects, but a markedly different one from those of the social sciences, if Marketing and Statistics can be taken as belonging within that area.

When university extension courses are seen in the context of a national policy on languages, questions may be asked about the place of such courses in relation to TAFE, to other adult education classes, and to such specialised institutions as the Alliances Françaises. A survey conducted by one of the Alliances revealed that there is a public perception that Alliance courses are superior to the others in the above list, largely because they are taught by native speakers. But that says more about the assumptions abroad in the educational market than it does about the professional value of teacher qualifications and student outcomes. Indeed while there is clearly no standardisation of goals or methods across various systems and sub-systems there is anecdotal evidence that broad methodological influences pervade classroom practice in the different places. Numbers of teachers are in fact to be found teaching in more than one institution, and their mobility must contribute to currents of lateral influence.

Language policy has more to gain, perhaps, from a consideration of the kinds of courses available in university extension programs especially where those courses differ interestingly from standard university offerings. A striking example of this is the intensive course usually offered by language institutes during university vacations. The Horwood language centre at Melbourne University is regularly involved in this sort of activity, with French as one of its most successful offerings. In 1991, the UQIML offered eight intensive courses in six languages with a total enrolment of 135, 63 in Japanese (2 courses) and 34 in French (2 courses). None of the other languages was offered in more than one course. Since the Leal report's call for university language departments to offer intensive language courses for degree credit (1991:I,178), it is likely that more attention will henceforth be paid by universities to degree courses of this kind. There is opportunity here for a fruitful interaction between the credit and non-credit arms of university language teaching. Monash has been a pioneer within Australia in its development of intensive courses for credit (Marriot 1991:18-25), and Queensland has recently begun to offer French courses along the same lines.

Intensive courses of this sort are one of the ways in which university extension teaching is moving away from its traditional role. Another is special purpose offerings. UNSWIL may be the most innovative in this regard, since it provides commissioned courses to corporate clients and government departments. UNSWIL also offers "airline courses" in seven different languages, including French. As in the case of intensive courses, these courses designed for particular employer groups and professional needs may well have some influence on the work of university language departments. There is, of course, an important difference between commissioned courses and the more broadly based language education of the sort found in degree courses, but there is also a sense in which commissioned courses are exemplary for many teachers of French today, since there may well be teaching skills and materials developed for highly focussed purposes that have a broader impact. The very specificity of these courses

demonstrates that French and other LOTEs are useable in a narrowly demanding context. The role of general education is not to turn its back on these specific-purpose courses, or their materials and methods, but somehow to hold them together with other courses and uses of different kinds. For university departments, commissioned courses can serve to represent the useability of the language, its range as well as its specificity.

2.3.4 TAFE

The information contained in this section of our report is drawn from *Survey of Languages Other than English in Tafe: A Report*, by Baker and White (1991), complemented by data obtained in a follow-up study by the same researchers during the first half of 1992. In the presentation of their survey, Baker and White present a number of reasons for treating their data with caution. The most general of these, reiterated à propos of their 1992 work, is that it is difficult to have reliable detail of what is taking place throughout the TAFE system (or systems), given the local nature of much of its administration, and the relative fragmentation of much of its course offerings. This should not, however, be taken as a reason for any neglect of TAFE in the context of a national LOTE policy. As Baker and White point out:

> The TAFE Systems must be included in any national advisory body on LOTEs, such as Leal's proposed Advisory Committee on Modern Languages, since these systems provide a large proportion of the nation's LOTE courses.
>
> TAFE Colleges need to be recognised by decision makers and by the community as significant LOTE providers, and any advertising or marketing campaign to promote LOTEs to the community should give TAFE colleges some prominence. (1991:viii)

Having recognized the importance of TAFE systems in principle, one still has to deal with the very considerable difficulty of determining what LOTE courses are taught and where, to how many students, at what levels, and with what outcomes. One source of difficulty, as Baker and White point out (1991:16), is that there is quite a discrepancy between the number of LOTE courses offered and the number actually taught, since courses are only taught where enrolment demand reaches a threshold level (sometimes 10 per class, sometimes 15 or more). As an example of the problems faced by any survey, gross numbers of students taking LOTE classes in Queensland TAFE were put at about 5,000 by the state head office, whereas responses to the 1991 survey would indicate that there were only 135 classes in the state, averaging perhaps 20 students per class. Whether this is attributable to some shortcoming on the part of the survey, which was conducted in a highly professional and diligent manner, or whether it reveals great inadequacy of data-keeping at the highest administrative level, the warning signs for researchers are clear enough: generalisations about actual numbers of students in the system(s) cannot be attempted with any confidence.

It seems safer to follow Baker and White in identifying the leading LOTEs in TAFE, and trying to draw conclusions about their relative importance. The

most popular languages are Japanese, French, German, Chinese, Spanish, Indonesian and Italian, that is, the "languages of wider teaching" minus Arabic and Greek (Baker and White 1991:10). While the actual number of students, or even of courses offered, in each LOTE proved difficult to determine, responses to a student survey showed the following ranking:

Language	%
Japanese	33.6
French	13.6
German	13.0
Italian	10.3
Chinese	6.8
Indonesian	6.5
Spanish	6.5

(Baker and White 1991:81)

When other, less widely taught LOTEs are considered, it can be shown that a kind of balance is currently being achieved in practice:

Asian languages	48.8%
European languages	48.6%

(Baker and White 1991:81)

It should be noted that the "balance" is between a number of European languages of roughly equal strength, on the one hand, and one dominant Asian language, on the other. This kind of distribution is not unlike the one that is now emerging in some state secondary school systems.

To talk here of balance might also hide the fact that students' motivation for study might vary considerably from one language to another. Deveson (1990: II, 203) claims that in 1989 20% of people attending French classes in NSW TAFE were doing so for vocational reasons, as against 70% for Japanese. From that, Baker and White infer that the "hobby" motivation is greater for NSW French (and presumably German, Italian, and Spanish) than for Japanese. This is not to say that students' motivation is frivolous, or transitory. Evidence of that can be seen from the practice of continuing enrolment to more advanced levels. In areas where there has been an ongoing policy of strengthening LOTE courses for their own sake, such as the Central Metropolitan College (WA), student numbers have remained strong in response to the institution's commitment. One should of course be wary of stated reasons given by students for studying the language. Like business people and politicians, they know themselves to be speaking in an environment where it is often difficult to claim vocational usefulness for LOTEs other than Japanese, even if their hope is that language study might somehow relate to future employment.

Baker and White add another element of comparison by discussion of attrition rates for the various languages (1991:69-70). They suggest that "there appears to be some linkage between attrition rates and the perception of a language as being difficult and/or of little practical value" (1991:60). Comparative attrition rates for the most widely taught LOTEs are as follows:

Language	%
Japanese	27.1
French	31.3
German	30.3
Chinese	24.3
Indonesian	22.8
Spanish	42.1
Italian	23.0

Apart from the surprisingly high rate for Spanish, there seems little in these figures to suggest that significantly more students drop out of European languages than of Asian ones, although it may well be that the two possible reasons identified by Baker and White have a counter-balancing effect, if Asian languages are generally perceived as more useful, and European languages as less difficult.

One pattern in the comparative data not commented on by Baker and White is the uneven distribution of LOTEs throughout different levels. In this regard, a comparison between French and Japanese classes may prove enlightening:

	N/A	Beginners	Intermediate	Advanced	Total
French	1	18	9	5	33
Japanese	1	60	23	3	87

Table 87

It can be seen from the above that the proportion of intermediate to beginners' courses is 1:2 for French, whereas for Japanese it is just over 1:3. At the advanced level, the discrepancy is even more marked, with a proportion of advanced to intermediate courses of better than 1:2 for French and less than 1:7 for Japanese. It would seem from these figures that, while the attrition rate within a given French course may be slightly higher than for Japanese, the retention rate for students moving from one level to another is markedly better in the case of French. There could, however, be other factors contributing to this general pattern. For example, given the previous availability of French and Japanese, it seems likely that there would be more students at the level of advanced courses in French than in Japanese. It would be safer to say either that Japanese is not so much in demand at the higher level, or that the TAFE system is at present unable to respond to, or even help create, such a demand.

Between February and March 1992, Baker and White carried out a follow-up survey of the 113 TAFE colleges they had identified in 1991 as teaching LOTEs or intending to teach them in the near future. This survey sought to assess the actual numbers of classes being conducted in the system, although its authors continue to present their data with great caution. The colleges identified as possibly teaching LOTEs were asked to provide the number of classes actually being taught in semester 4, 1991, and semester 1, 1992. Their response rate was only 71%, but the aggregate figures produced for French were as follows:

State	Classes in semester 4, 1991	Classes in semester 1, 1992
Qld	30	30
NSW	23	11
Vic	12	13
Tas	1	2
SA	2	4
WA	7	6
NT	0	0
Total	75	66

Table 88

It would be rash to interpret the nett difference between 1992 and 1991 as a pattern of decline for French. In any case, the overall difference is caused almost entirely by changes in NSW. Even to speak of a local decline within NSW might be precipitate, although it is disturbing that NSW should be the state where French is most clearly in decline in the state secondary schools. It appears, in fact, that the drop has been largely the result of the changes in course offerings: French was one of the languages restreamed to stream 1000, and is therefore funded at a lower level by the state government, causing it to be treated as a low priority by the colleges. In effect, lower funding drives up the price of enrolment for students, and also reduces the number of classes colleges are able to offer.

Insofar as French courses in TAFE, notably in NSW, are primarily seen by students, and classified by administrators as hobby courses, it is interesting to ask why TAFE enrolments in French in NSW should appear to be declining at the same time as enrolments in the Sydney Alliance Française are rising sharply. Two possible explanations suggest themselves. The first is that an interest in learning French for leisure, or broadly cultural purposes might now be more acute, or more sustained than it was, and is therefore being directed towards such courses as those of the Alliance, which are generally seen as more demanding, more expensive, more authentic, and more distinguished. The second possible reason is that courses in French within the TAFE system may be losing ground because of a greater insistence within TAFE on vocational courses, given the widespread, if unsound, assumption that European languages are less "vocational" than Asian ones. If this is so, there is no evidence that any LOTE has gained from it. Italian has decreased as sharply as French, and German even more so. The only two languages not to suffer a substantial decrease in NSW were Japanese (with about 5 times as many courses as French in 1992) and Chinese (with about 50% more).

Whatever the pattern of future developments in LOTE courses in TAFE, the latest figures from NSW show the absurdity of the claim, quoted in our introduction, that French, or German, or Italian might be blocking the development of Japanese and Chinese.

- The Council of Adult Education in Victoria has a similar status to that of TAFE, but is an autonomous organisation with a very long history. It offers fee-paying courses, both day and evening, to adults (the minimum age is 15) with no assessment and therefore no possibility of accreditation to other courses,

although the possibility of changing this in selected cases has been canvassed in a survey of LOTE students enrolled (Hartmann, Bianciardi & McKenna, 1991). The LOTE co-ordinator also drew a comparison with the Alliance Française, in respect of the clientele for French. But the CAE is different from both these organisation in several crucial respects:

a It offers a variety of models of courses in French, some intensive for travellers, over several weekends, some short courses, some intensive "catch-up" courses, and some full-year courses. The beginners' course in French is regularly one of its most popular offerings, and it is possible to study French over a sequence of seven full-year courses, and to emerge with genuine advanced level competence. The CAE can expect 20+ students in its advanced courses on a regular basis. Enrolled students can borrow audio-visual and print materials from the Council resources.

b Many of its French teachers are trained secondary teachers; some of these are retired, some are on family leave, some taking on the extra work after school in the evening because they enjoy teaching adults, and enjoy the conditions established by the absence of assessment. This means that the staff at the CAE can be expected to be quite up-to-date with current work in French teaching, and with current affairs in France. They often develop their own materials for the purposes of the groups they work with.

c The clientele is unlike that of the Alliance Française, in that the course coordinators do not see their job as supplementing school instruction, and in the *de facto* exclusion of native speakers and the French community from their activities. ◆

2.4 Other

2.4.1 The Alliance Française

The Alliance Française is talked about in two rather different ways. From a French point of view, it is seen classically as an arm of linguistic influence, and an instrument for the dissemination of French civilisation (see for example, Fourestier in Nisbet 1984:29). In Australian terms, however, it can be described as a gathering point for public interest in France and things French, and as the place where a particular set of educational demands is evident. The Alliance Française was first established in Australia in 1890, and has seen its functions change quite considerably since that time. Drivon describes the setting up and administration of local Alliances as being led, over time, by three different groups. The first of these, he says, were fashion-conscious people who formed the Melbourne Alliance, for example, as a rather exclusive club. The second were university teachers, who effected a veritable takeover during the 1960s, bringing with them a more explicit

emphasis on education, while the third were representatives of French companies established in various parts of Australia, some of them rather remote, where there may have been little previous demand (Drivon, *Le Courrier Australien*, April 1992:29). The modern Alliances Françaises seem to bear the marks of these three rather disparate traditions.

To describe the history of the Alliance Française in terms of a policy of gradual expansion guided by remote control from Paris would therefore be quite misleading. In the first place, membership of the Alliances is not dominated anywhere by expatriate or immigrant French people. According to a recent survey of the Sydney membership, French people constitute 25% of members, Australians 55%, and others 20%. The different Alliances Françaises, now 23 in number, depend on a more or less autonomous rallying of local interest. As lo Bianco and Monteil point out, enrolments in Alliance courses can be taken as a fair indication of educational demand, since people choose to follow those courses at their own expense, and in their own time (1990:11). Rising demand led to an increase of overall student numbers from about 3000 in 1986, to about 7000 in 1991, with further increases of about 20% p.a. in Sydney and 15% p.a in Melbourne since then. Judging by the survey we have consulted, and the opinions expressed by experienced teachers, Australians who join an Alliance Française do so out of an "amateur" interest in French, in the etymological sense of that French word. They follow classes and participate in other activities because of their "liking" or "love" for the language. Their strongest motivation, according to the survey, is an interest in travel to France. More generally, they are attracted by French as an aesthetic object, or set of objects. Often, as one former teacher pointed out, they are cultivated people, trained in other fields, who are adding another element to their education. While many of these people may be thought of as belonging to a relatively distinguished, not to say self-consciously refined group within Australian society, one should beware of defining the Alliance Française and its public too narrowly. Certainly, there is a strong historical tendency for the Alliance to attract a disproportionately large number of socially advantaged people, a great many of them women without professional employment, but that pattern shows signs of changing. According to the director of courses at Sydney, the larger Alliances are now attracting more members from professional groups than previously. Furthermore, some Alliances are making a special effort to reach other parts of the population, especially students, by offering classes at lower rates.

What appears to have changed historically within the Alliances is the relationship between their social club and educational functions. According to Nettlebeck (1991:18-20), the Melbourne Alliance in 1966, had almost no adult students, even though it was continuing to act as a cultural centre. Six years later, however, adults made up 50% of the student numbers. A similar change appears to have occurred in Adelaide, where the Alliance was described to us as having been a "fairly stable social club", which only began to teach adults in 1979. In the course of these changes, sociable forms of education have evolved, and the expectation of adult students today seem to be that Alliance course will fulfil both functions at once.

Because of the demands placed on the Alliances by their Australian members and clients, difficulties can arise in students' evaluation of French classes. According to the market research, those who choose to study at an Alliance expect to find that the whole experience will be one of high

quality, in keeping with what they see as the high cost, and the elevated social standing of learning French from native speakers. In this regard, they sometimes come to voice their disappointment, not usually at the quality of teaching, but at certain Alliance buildings and classrooms, which they are inclined to see as inelegant or undistinguished. There may even be an unfortunate discrepancy, in certain cases, between strong student exigencies about the decor of their learning, on the one hand, and unambitious expectations as to eventual proficiency, on the other. Perhaps Alliance students suffer even more acutely than their fellow language-learners in other institutions from a lack of awareness of the processes in which they are engaged. If the market survey is to be believed, some of them can be disappointed at having spent time and money on a course, only to find that they cannot reliably cope with authentic texts, such as films. In a sense, such people are caught between the facile notion that French is a luxury item available for purchase, and the painful realisation that achieving proficiency in the language will require protracted effort.

The Alliances Françaises have to carry out their work in the space of these tensions and contradictions, moving as they do between the transitory and the sustained, the fashionable and the professional. Within their classes, there may be more than the usual degree of tension, as the survey suggests, between those who are impatient to push on with their learning, and those who are content to proceed at a leisurely pace. The very categories of students and classes reflect this diversity, with more "sociable" day classes existing alongside business French, in-service seminars for school teachers, and various programs for school children which effectively supplement the formal work done in the secondary and primary systems. In Alliances such as those of Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane, publicity is gained, and much hard work done, through competitions for school children, including verse-speaking, questionnaires and projects on modern France, traditional examinations, and even a theatrical contest. Wisely, Alliance teachers try to mediate between the pleasure which their members and clients almost invariably associate with French, and the need to have clear learning goals. As one director put it, the aim of an Alliance Française is to lead its students to go on associating French, not just with compulsory tasks, but with enjoyment.

2.4.2 Proprietary Language Schools

Where French is concerned, very little teaching seems to be done through private language schools. The list of such schools is quite long, even if unstable, as can be seen in the national data base made available through the NLLIA's LATTICE at UQ, but the primary preoccupation of these schools is with the teaching of English as a second language. A few teach Japanese, but only one of those listed can be identified as offering French. It must therefore be supposed that the great bulk of would-be French learners turn to the Alliance Française and university extension courses, or to the TAFE for their education.

1 The figures for 1988 are taken from the DEET Survey 1988. The figures supplied to the NLLIA by the Northern Territory Department of Education give a total of 42 primary students of French in 1988.

2 "In a previous memorandum in 1991, the Director-General of Education indicated that this practice impedes the goal of ensuring continuity in teaching and learning from Years Six through Eight in LOTE and creates confusion in the minds of parents, teachers and students. The practice of 'sampling' also does not contribute to the wider goals of LOTE teaching in educational terms." (From a memorandum to the principals of all state schools in the metropolitan East region, from ER McDonald, Assistant Executive Director, Studies, dated 10 March 1992.)

3 In the AISQ survey, this total is given as 1172, but given their other figures, this must be incorrect.

4 Figures from the Catholic Education Office appear in square brackets where they differ from those in the DEET survey.

5 Report of Survey of Teaching of Languages Other Than English September 1991: "This Survey was conducted by the Association of Independent Schools of Victoria in March 1991. The report comprises a series of tables and lists which summarise data relating to LOTE taught in both Primary and Secondary non-government, non-Catholic schools in Victoria in 1991. [...] All member schools of the Association of Independent Schools of Victoria, and non-member, non-Government, non-Catholic schools in Victoria were surveyed." (From the foreword).

6 In this table, figures presented for both sexes may occasionally be greater than the sum of the male and female students, since one school did not provide separate figures for male and female students at some levels. The number of French students is greater than that shown here, because another school, which has French as one of its language offerings, only gave overall LOTE totals.

7 In calculating this figure, we have followed what seems to be the practice of the Department of Education in its totals supplied for previous years, and not counted , as part of the LOTE total, students studying aboriginal languages in schools in Aboriginal communities.

8 The Junior Syllabus introduces itself as follows:
This syllabus endeavours to put forward universal functions of language which will relate to the communicative needs of students and which will give them resources for internalising linguistic skills well beyond the simple imitation of patterns and situations. (QBSSS 1988:1)

9 Note that some of the pages in the 1987 Syllabus have now been replaced by an insert.

10 The Senior Syllabus of 1987 made some other suggestions, listing as "resources/texts available and in use at the time of printing: "*Méthode Orange* Book 3; *Le Monde des Jeunes*; *Nous les Jeunes* (Holt Saunders); *Au Courant* Book 1 (Longmans); *En Effeuillant la marguerite* (Hachette); *Connaître et se connaître* (Holt, Rinehart, Winston); *Action* 4 (Michael Buckby); *Elle* (Hachette); *Sans frontières* (Hachette); *Les Chemins de l'information* 1 and 2 (Hachette); *Tricolore* (Pergamon Press). Suggested radio and television programs were *Ensemble*; *Sur le Vif*; *A Vous La France*; *Entrée Libre*; *La Marée et ses secrets*; *Tout Compris*; *Encounter France*. A computer software list is promised.

11 The same opinion was expressed by a leading teacher-educator in NSW, who suggested that *Ça bouge* tended to collapse cultural differences between Australia and French-speaking countries.

12 Steele, Ross and Jacqueline Gaillard. 1985. *L'Express: Ainsi va la France*. Clé International: Paris.

13 These would be administered to correspondance pupils and other individuals who did not attend a regular school. For example, a native speaker could sit the examinations without having studied a French course.

14 This total for female students is not that given by the QCEC, but is the sum of the subtotals presented.

15 See section on Teacher Training (2.3.1.11) for details of the course available to teachers of French in Australia.

16 "The ultimate aim is to make the study of languages other than English available to all government primary students and to make a second language a required study of all government students in Years 7-10. A step in this direction was the announcement that, in 1992, a language other than English would be a core study for all students at Year 7" (DSEV 1992:Preface).
"In colleges that provide languages, 98 per cent of students are required to study a language at Years [sic] 7. At Year 8, 87 per cent of students are required to study a language. From Year 9, languages are often optional" (DSEV 1992:13).

17 "*Travelling*: this theme is particularly appropriate for students of French in the light of the number of Australian tourists visiting France and other French speaking countries" (VCAB 1990:15).

18 The figures supplied by the Ministry of Education do not show any students in Years 11 and 12 for 1988 or 1991, in any language. However, we know from the DEET Survey of 1988, that there were senior students of French in that year. The totals for 1988 and 1991, and the percentages for those years are only working on figures for the junior school

19 See preceeding note.

20 Teachers spoke of their feelings of inadequacy when using authentic documents.

21 Naiman, N, Frohlich, M and Todesco, A (1978) "The good language learner," in *Research in Education Series, 7*. Toronto, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

22 Chastain, Kenneth, "The ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines: a Selected Sample of Opinions." *ADFL Bulletin*, 20 (1989), 47-51.

23 Lantolf, James P., and William Frawley, "Oral Proficiency Testing: A Critical Analysis" *Modern Language Journal*, 69 (1985), 337-345.

24 This is in line with the latest research into communicative methodology. For a collection of recent work on this topic see James, C. and Garrett, P. (eds.) 1991.

25 French, Australian Studies, Religion Studies, Marketing and Statistics.

3.0 French as a Community Language

It may seem paradoxical to many to speak of French as a community language in Australia. After all, the notion of a community language has tended in everyday use, if not in careful formulations of policy, to be associated with socially disadvantaged groups. Community languages are often considered to be somewhat lacking in prestige, requiring a special effort on the part of Australians if they are to be recognized and properly maintained. French is rarely mentioned in such discussions, being spoken of most often as an "international" language, as if the one excluded the other. When summary classifications of this sort are used to distinguish between languages as whole entities, many of the key issues can be lost from view. That is no doubt why *DEET* (1991) avoids using such expressions: "Terms such as *community languages* and *economic languages* are not used in the Policy Information Paper or companion volume, as they are not mutually exclusive categories" (II, 10). To the extent, however, that the terms are used - and this occurs quite often in less technical discussions - such prominent "community languages" have tended not to gain full recognition for their international importance. With French, the reverse may sometimes be true. Because it is almost never thought of as a disadvantaged language, there may be a tendency to overlook one of its roles in Australia: helping to define a minority social group within the community.

Because of such ambiguity about the place of French in Australian society, it is possible that French may not be given due attention under the heading of community language policy. In one study, at least, it has been suggested that French speakers have suffered in this regard, being so to speak in the margin of the margin with respect to speakers of Italian and Greek (Baggioni 1987:12), although no compelling evidence of discrimination or neglect has emerged from Baggioni's study, or in the course of the present survey. Indeed, there is anecdotal evidence that French speakers and others with a keen interest in French, including teachers, have sometimes been reluctant to enter fully into the solidarity of community LOTEs. Where French is offered in Saturday schools or other specialized contexts, alongside Maltese or Croatian, that may be seen by a few as demeaning, presumably because it treats French as a language in need of "maintenance". Needless to say, the cause of French in Australia cannot be harnessed to such blinkered advocacy. To claim that there is an inherent difference which allows one language to be considered superior to another is simply indefensible, but the defensiveness and aloofness of certain French speakers can perhaps be understood as their response to certain contradictions in Australian society. There is unjustified respect in our society for aspects of foreign cultures (including many things French), accompanied by an unthinking readiness to denigrate other things that are unfamiliar (including, on occasion, some things French), and French speakers in Australia can be caught between these two tendencies. They, too, despite their relative prestige, can sometimes have the experience of being treated as "wogs".

3.1 Australia's French-speaking population

It is much more usual for sociologists and historians to speak of the "impact" of France and French on Australia, than of the presence of French-speakers in

the community. Price, in his preface to Stuer's *The French in Australia*, makes the point strongly and eloquently:

> On the one hand there is the considerable impact of the French nation and culture on Australia, as may be seen in the fears aroused by French explorers, at French moves in New Caledonia and the New Hebrides, by French becoming the main foreign language in Australian schools, by the proliferation of cultural groups such as the Alliance Française or of French schools such as those of the Marist brothers: on the other hand is the fact that the French have never settled in Australia in large numbers, nothing like the Germans, Italians, Greeks and Yugoslavs. (Stuer 1982:iv)

This might well be taken as an essential paradox for the discussion of French in Australia, but it misses an interesting point. The census figures of 1976 and 1986 show that a significant proportion of Australians declare themselves to be regular users of French at home. The number of domestic French-speakers, according to the 1986 census, is of the same order as the number of speakers of Vietnamese, Dutch, Maltese, or Macedonian.

Language	Numbers
Italian	415765
Greek, Serbo-Croatan, Serbian, Yugoslav	140575
Chinese	139100
Arabic	119187
German	111276
Spanish	73961
Polish	68638
Vietnames	65856
Dutch	62181
Maltese	59506
French	52790
Macedonian	45610
Aboriginal languages	40790

Table 89
Major languages other than English spoken within Australia in 1986
From: DEET (1991:II,17); ABS Census, 1986

Clyne had already observed with surprise the number of French-speakers recorded in the 1976 census:

> One of the surprising features of the statistics is the large number of French speakers. It seems that French has been popularly underestimated as a community language in Australia. Apart form native speakers from Mauritius and France, and to a lesser extent, Belgium, Canada, Switzerland, and the Pacific, there are multilinguals from South East Asia, Eastern Europe and the Middle East who may still be using French as a *lingua franca*. Also, many non-native speakers have through study or residence in a French-speaking country, gained proficiency in the language and use it regularly - French teachers included. (1982:9)

When French is "underestimated" in this way, Clyne suggests, there appear to be at least two factors at work. One is that popular commentary tends to neglect the function of French as a means of communication within and between quite different ethnic groups. The second is that French, because of the commitment so often displayed by those who teach and learn it as a second language, becomes for some a source of adopted or associative cultural identity. As Grassby noted in his introduction to Nisbet:

> In Sydney it is interesting that French emerges as a significant community language in suburbs of recent immigration from countries where French is a major language and in areas where Australia academic and professional people continue to record it as their second language. (Nisbet 1984:4)

The existence of this second group causes a technical difficulty where French is concerned. How are policy-makers to distinguish between first- and second-language users of French? Clyne (1982:33) discusses the question, as does Baggioni (1987:23), but one is entitled to ask whether there is really a great deal at stake in making the distinction. Perhaps the very fact that so many Australians of non-French-speaking backgrounds attach value to the language allows French to help break down some of the ingrained resistance to, or disrespect of, other LOTEs. In that sense, French continues to have a status amongst anglo-celtic Australians not fully enjoyed by such historically and internationally prestigious languages as Italian: a well-defined presence of French amongst Australian community languages can only be of benefit to all.

It may be worthy of note also that the "French" community language group is bound by its commitment to the language, which works across a variety of ethnic and national backgrounds. Clyne suggests that this may be something of an exception to the Australian norm: "Here is an example of a group *united* through its attitude to a language even though its members are representative of different cultures and ethnicities" (1991:101 original emphasis).

3.2 Community uses of French

3.2.1 Radio

French has its place in a number of the most notable areas of community language use in Australia. It is certainly present in the Ethnic Broadcasting Association, claiming and using the fullest possible share of air time. The French section of Brisbane's 4EB, for example, draws on a committed group of French-speaking volunteers from a number of different countries (France, Belgium, Holland, Germany and Zaire, among others), and its members have a variety of educational and cultural backgrounds. The programmes produced by the French group include within their range such diverse elements as traditional and modern popular music, literary reviews, and occasional broadcasts by student groups. Here again, the audience of the French section is potentially and actually much greater than that of other language groups whose "communities", variously defined, appear to be of the same size. Lo

Bianco and Monteil (1990:15-16) report on a survey conducted in 1989 by the Conseil Supérieur des Français à l'Etranger, the results of which suggested that approximately 793,000 people in Australia understood enough to be able to follow the programmes of the 17 Australian community radios and the overseas broadcasts of Radio France Internationale. A sense of this broader community and of its receptiveness to French no doubt helps to motivate French-speakers working within the Ethnic Broadcasting Association. It may also lead them, on occasion, to feel that their large pool of casual and amateur listeners is not fully recognized when French comes to take its place alongside other languages whose cultural identity is more narrowly defined in the Australian context.

3.2.2 Television

Even those French-speakers who would like to see French play a greater role in community radio are likely to concede that French is fairly well represented on SBS television. In 1991, there were 147 hours of programs in French shown on SBS, i.e. 3.86% of the total air time. This is roughly in keeping with the relative importance of French as a community language. It seems surprising, in the light of this statistic, that our study should have encountered evidence of unease among some language communities about the supposedly high profile of French on SBS. As Clyne points out, however, SBS chooses its programs on the basis of multiple criteria: "The availability of suitable high-quality films combined with population statistics and the interest of particular groups in films from their countries determine choice of community language films" (1991:238). It may seem to some observers that a degree of prominence is given to, or taken by French, Canadian, Swiss and Belgian films. The explanation for this is presumably that French-speaking countries provide SBS with a steady supply of good quality programs. It should be noted, in addition, that a 1987 survey reported by Clyne (1991:151) showed that 35% of Italian-speaking viewers of SBS watch French programs. French makes distinctive contributions here of two kinds. Firstly, French is a LOTE which may seem relatively accessible to speakers of many other LOTEs. Secondly, it is likely that French programs shown on SBS contribute to the standing and popularity of the channel in Australia by attracting numbers of viewers whose first language is English.

3.2.3 Newspaper

Anyone who doubts the coherence, or even the existence, of a French-speaking community in Australia could not fail to be impressed by the success of *Le Courrier australien*. This newspaper is the oldest non-English newspaper in Australia, and recently celebrated its centenary. Its circulation is currently about 7,000 copies per issue, 25% of which are distributed in New South Wales, 20% in Victoria and about 10% each in Queensland, South Australia, and Western Australia. The remaining 25% mainly go to overseas subscribers. As the Minister of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs stated in the short piece he wrote in recognition of that event, *The Courrier Australien* provides the French-speaking community in Australia with a valuable alternative viewpoint of current affairs" (*Courrier australien*, 10 April 1992:2). One of the striking aspects of the newspaper as

it now functions is the commercial activity reflected in its pages. In addition to detailed reports on current affairs in French-speaking countries, *Le Courrier australien* serves as a clearing-house for information about the activities of companies in Australia with a French connection. Two national federations are in fact strongly represented in the newspaper. The first of these is the Federation of French Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Australia, grouping business interests joining Australia and (especially) France. The second is the national Federation of Alliances Françaises, which brings together many French-speaking and francophile Australians. The coexistence of these two bodies points to the real vitality of French as a language in the Australian community. One may question to what extent it is "ethno-linguistic vitality" in the narrow sense (see Clyne 1982:33 for some discussion of the term); yet there is no doubt of the resilience, not to say the expansiveness of French-language-based cultural and commercial networks in Australia.

4.0 French in World Trade

4.1 Evaluating the Role of Languages in Trade

Those who have proficiency in more than one language do not have to be convinced of the potential uses of LOTEs in business activity. They see that marketing is dependent on good communication, and that what counts as "good communication" is not the same in different cultural contexts. Being direct, assertive and confident may be valued in one place, while being oblique, allusive and patient may be appropriate in another. Such differences are seen by people with language sensitivity as having little to do with individual personality, and much to do with particular codes of social and linguistic behaviour. For linguists, it is simply not true that people are the same the world over, and that they will respond warmly to a broad smile and a vigorous handshake.

When those with an interest in languages turn their attention to the language needs of business people, however, they find little or no agreement as to what those "needs" are. The major difficulty in Australia is that many business people do not concede that they need greater LOTE skills in order to succeed in foreign trade. They recognize the importance of customer relations in general, and the need to know foreign markets in particular, as Stanley, Ingram and Chittick point out (1990:3-4). Yet they do not see any particular connection between that kind of knowledge and LOTEs. This is what gives rise to a great methodological difficulty pointed to by Stanley et al (1990:10). When linguists endeavour to assess the foreign language needs of the business community, they tend to find many of the respondents to questionnaires affirming that they simply do not have any foreign language needs, and that they can manage perfectly well in English wherever they go. Faced with this evidence, the linguists can only declare that the people they are surveying are unaware of how their own profession works, or ought to work. Stanley et al. seem almost driven to despair when attempting to talk about the difference that would be made in business by a knowledge of LOTE: "To convey a sense of this difference is akin to explaining colour to someone who is colour blind. It cannot be known only at an intellectual level, it has to be experienced to be understood" (1990:19). There seems little point in sending out questionnaires asking the figuratively blind what they can see, and little value in canvassing general attitudes when those attitudes themselves can be seen as the most basic problem.

In the hope of eventually moving beyond this dilemma, Stanley et al. point to the possibility of a more strictly pragmatic analysis. Instead of looking at attitudes or beliefs, one can look at outcomes. Specifically, one can seek to determine what are the consequences of knowledge or ignorance of LOTEs for export performance. There is in fact strong evidence that knowledge of LOTEs corresponds to export success, but this evidence is usually of an experiential, pragmatic kind, and it tends to be produced in a context of market pressure from others who value and practise language skills.

The difference between asking company leaders to rate the importance of LOTEs, and actually assessing their pragmatic significance in performance can be seen quite clearly in Butler (1988). Butler surveyed competitors in the

Australian Export Awards of 1987, and conducted a comparative analysis of finalists and non-finalists, according to a range of criteria. The survey of opinions revealed no more than usual. As a group, the respondents did not rate LOTE skills a key factor in export success. When Butler examined their practice, however, he found that, among the finalists, 68.6% of companies had employees fluent in one or more of four key languages (Japanese, Chinese, Arabic, and French), whereas only 32.1% of non-finalists were in the same position. The number of employees per company with LOTE averaged 5.7 among the finalists, and 1.4 among non-finalists. Clearly, those with a strong LOTE capacity did better, even though they did not attribute much of their success to the LOTE factor.

This finding can be contrasted with the results of surveys of language needs conducted recently in the UK. In 1989, a survey was conducted among Australian companies established in the UK, to determine how they viewed "Europe 1992". Those companies were asked to state what they saw as the most valued assets in a European joint venture partner. They rated highest the following three qualities, in order:

- cultural/local knowledge (67%)
- market intelligence (66%)
- familiarity with the language (64%)

Why is there such a discrepancy between these responses and those in Butler (1988), which may even have been addressed to some of the same companies? Presumably because Australian companies established in the UK are regularly exposed to discussion of the value of languages, and to market pressure from language-conscious competitors.

Embleton, who is himself based in Britain, talks about measuring language needs for business by means of what he calls the "language audit". Such an audit can serve to determine demand within a particular company (1992:219). He mentions, for example, that a language audit was carried out on a representative sample of Lloyd's companies and, without going into details, asserts that "the survey *proved* the demand and need for language training. It also revealed the languages in demand - and why - and the optimum tuition times" (1992:219). It has to be said, however, to return to our key methodological problem, that it may not yet be possible to conduct proper language audits in Australia, where there is often little or no perceived need. When analysing Australia's relative failure to export to non-English-speaking markets, one cannot expect surveys of opinion to be decisive.

It is not just that there might be different causes of the failure to export, of which the widespread ignorance of LOTEs may be one, but that failure itself might not even be perceived. There is a danger that Australian business people might come to the end of meetings in Japan, France or Saudi Arabia feeling quite content with proceedings. They might even feel quite self-congratulatory when in fact they had been judged negatively by those with whom they were negotiating. Even more regrettably, it may be that many Australian companies have not come so close to their targets as to have crucial meetings, successful or otherwise. "Failure", in this context, is not necessarily a dramatic event in which communication breaks down. It happens routinely when people do not notice how communication might be

possible. Such failure can mean that Australians simply do not try to market Australian products in unfamiliar places. To put it most negatively, this might mean that business people not only do not try to do better in non-English-speaking markets, but do not even know how to try. As Stanley et al. say, "What is critical here is that the significance of this ignorance cannot be appreciated precisely because the businessman has no experience of the difference that knowing the language could actually bring" (1990:5).

4.2 Language Uses in Business

Another symptom of relative blindness to the business uses of LOTEs is the widespread tendency to speak of language knowledge in binary terms: one either has, or does not have, German, Spanish, or Mandarin. This view can be associated with a cluster of dubious assumptions and doubtful practices: that a lawyer with Year 12 French can write a professional letter, or that a Vietnamese refugee employed as a cleaner can interpret for a visit by a team of Vietmanese business leaders. It can also be used as an excuse for giving up, by observing that senior business people in Australia just do not "have" foreign languages as a rule, and claiming that it is too late to do anything about it. Where this view is held, no pattern of change is likely to emerge, because gradual changes cannot even be envisaged.

As a corrective to this attitude, it is helpful to think in terms of a range of language uses, extending from the least to the most demanding. The most rudimentary function is no doubt that of foreign language labelling, with or without the production of promotional material in LOTEs. Such uses might be associated with the employment of local marketing agents in the target country, as a stage on the way to efficient cross-cultural communication. At the next level, there would be more elaborate use of qualified language professionals, for both interpreting and translation. Beyond this, or accompanying it, would be an ability on the part of our business people to use the local language in limited ways, to extend greetings, or to strengthen the communication situation itself. A further development of this stage might also be the ability to use an appropriate second language for the purposes of market contact, as a form of politeness, and as a mark of communicative effort (French in Spain, German in Hungary or Mandarin in Vietnam, for example). The most advanced and most desirable stage is of course that of full professional mastery of the language. At that point, as a multilingual French businessman put it in an interview, one is moving into the inner world of one's interlocutors, discussing their ideas in the language they use among themselves, and leading them to say things they might not otherwise have been prepared to say. Embleton quotes a British business person as saying: "I find that more information can be obtained from people if they can speak freely in their own language rather than having to concentrate on speaking mine" (1992:11).

In a series of studies carried out in New Zealand in 1966, 1976 and 1986, Watts (1987) has examined business uses of LOTEs, providing evidence that is not currently available about Australia. Because his studies have been conducted at ten year intervals, Watts has been able to draw certain conclusions, not about the absolute value of language knowledge for foreign trade, but about changing patterns of use within New Zealand. His purpose

in 1986 was "to investigate whether or not the increased emphasis [since 1966 and 1976] on trading with countries outside the traditional English-speaking areas has resulted in an increase in the use of foreign languages" (1987:i). His conclusions on the subject suggest that many New Zealand exporters are one stage beyond their Australian counterparts. There is widespread and rapidly increasing use of LOTEs in labelling and packaging, and in publicity material, but only limited use of LOTEs in day-to-day correspondence with customers (1987:2). Watts does not ask in the first instance whether New Zealand companies consciously value foreign languages. He simply seeks to determine where and how they are already using them, and how the uses may have developed over time.

Precisely because New Zealand companies seem more language aware, on average, than Australian ones, Watts has been able to identify a large sample of firms using LOTEs in export transactions. Of the 446 firms surveyed, 311 were in the group of regular LOTE users (group 1). It has to be remembered that 1,063 firms were approached initially, and that those with no interest in LOTEs were less likely to have replied, but it is striking nonetheless that 70% of the firms responding belonged in the group of those making regular use of LOTEs for export trading. Watts was thus able to set out the following table, showing the number of "publicity items" produced for each language in 1986, with the 1976 figures shown in brackets.

Language	Total
French	1038 (145)
Japanese	438 (26)
Arabic	313 (24)
German	279 (32)
Spanish	255 (15)
Chinese	175 (17)
Dutch	41 (0)
Italian	39 (6)
Korean	24 (0)
Swedish	19 (2)
Samoan	16 (0)
Flemish	15 (0)
Danish	11 (5)
Tongan	10 (3)
Hindi	7 (15)
Russian	5 (0)
Tahitian	5 (0)
Pidgin English	3 (0)
Hungarian	1 (0)
Indonesian	1 (8)

Table 90
Languages used by firms in Group I in order of frequency
From Watts (1987:13)

The number of firms responding to the 1976 survey was smaller (258, as against 311 in 1986), so that one is not entitled simply to compare the 1986 total with the 1976, as an exact measure of difference. But the fact that the 1986 total is nine times higher than the 1976 one must be taken as a mark of very considerable change. This change seems to have gone on accelerating, if Watts' most recent survey (1992) is to be taken as a guide. He calculates that there were 0.3 items of promotional material in French for every New

Zealand exporting company surveyed in 1976, 2.3 per exporter in 1986, and 13.9 per exporter in 1992. (He notes, however, that the 1992 sample was smaller than the 1976 and 1986 ones, and consisted only of larger firms.) Stanley et al. (1990) and Leal (1991) suggest that such change has hardly begun to occur in Australia.

4.3 French and Business

To Australians with a narrow idea of the functions of French, the results of Watts' survey are bound to be quite surprising. There are those who depend for their understanding of LOTE education, and of French in particular, on what Stanley et al. call "old classroom experiences" (1990:19). When French is seen exclusively as the traditional foreign language, such distinctively "modern" uses as commercial ones have to involve some radical innovation. There is often an assumption that new LOTEs must replace French, whether they be Japanese, Spanish, or Arabic. It is for this reason that caution must be exercised when discussing the "demand" for particular languages. If demand is something that is measured by asking business people their opinion, then it may be inflected or distorted by those "old classroom experiences", by stereotyped views of languages, and of the role they ought to play in Australia's future. Stanley et al. say that French is sixth among Australia's major trading languages, and there is no particular reason to question this, but the basis of their assessment is not clear (1990:31). McLeod (1989) is quoted in *Australia's Languages* (1991) as ranking it fourth in order of importance. Butler (1988) includes it in his list of the four "generally of most use to Australian exporters". Watts, it should be noted, does not ask anyone to rank French with respect to other LOTEs. He merely counts the number of times companies actually use it, and draws the following conclusion about New Zealand: "French remains the foreign language most employed in publicity materials when a single language is utilized, as well as in conjunction with other languages in bilingual or multilingual forms" (1987:1). If one reads the figures given by Watts with attention, there is evidence of a historical shift in the frequency of use of certain languages by New Zealand companies. Japanese has increased in the last ten years by a factor of sixteen, and Arabic by a factor of thirteen, but French, having been by far the most used language in 1966 and 1976, has gone on increasing rapidly in use throughout the decade, the number of uses being multiplied by seven. There has been no thought, apparently, that actual usage of French must decrease in order to make way for Japanese or Arabic. If French were only taking up space that deserved to be occupied by more "relevant" languages, then it is hard to see why it should continue to progress so rapidly in regular commercial use. It has presumably flourished because it has already had the opportunity to prove its usefulness in the New Zealand context. Commercial value there does not seem to be defined as the opposite of traditional prestige. In Australia, on the other hand, there is some evidence that business people have not only failed to recognize the general importance of LOTEs for trade, but that, because they have often failed to understand the particular applications in this area, they have failed to see the relevance of French, and perhaps failed to recognize its rightful place.

4.4 The International Role of French

4.4.1 Diplomacy

As lo Bianco and Monteil point out, there are in the United Nations Organisation two categories of highly valued and frequently used languages: official languages, and working ones. The official languages are five in number: Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish. The working languages are an even more select group, consisting only of English and French (1990:54). Lo Bianco and Monteil go on to explain the term "working language", and in so doing illustrate the significance of French, not just as a traditional language of refined exchange, but as a standard medium of international contact:

> The term "working languages" refers to the languages in which the bureaucracy and administration of the system operate. For the whole of the post-World War II period [...], these have been English and French only. These languages, therefore, are the ones in which all official documents are drafted and in which meetings and correspondence are undertaken. (1990:55)

In the words of the former UN Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar, "At the United Nations, [...] French is read and spoken not only by those for whom it is a mother tongue but also by those for whom it has become their adoptive language. Whether [using it] as a mother tongue or as a foreign language, French speakers appear at the UN in all [their] diversity" (lo Bianco and Monteil 1990: 55-56).

Many of these linguistic work habits can be seen to recur in the EEC, despite an explicit policy which gives value to all national languages in the community. "At present, it is estimated that 90% of the EEC personnel can work in French and 42.7% of the EEC documents originate in and are translated from French, making it the first working language of the community" (lo Bianco and Monteil 1990:58).

4.4.2 Technology and Science

International technology and science, it is well known, are dominated by English. It has been estimated that 90% of scientists know English, but also that 70% are able to read French (lo Bianco and Monteil 1990:87). Thus, French occupies a significant place in scientific and technological discourse. The proportion of scientific publications throughout the world in the leading languages, according to a 1986 French government survey, was as follows:

English	65%
Russian	12%
French	9.8%
German	7.6%
Other	5.6%

No language ranks anywhere near English in this particular competition, but it should be noted that, contrary to its stereotypical image in Australia, French occupies an honourable place here, between Russian and German.

Liddicoat has drawn attention to the particular scientific and technological strengths of France: aeronautics, engineering, communications technology, and marine science (Blackman et al 1991:57). French achievements in aeronautics are widely recognized, including the design and production of Mirage jets, the Concorde, the Airbus, radar systems, and the like, many of which have been purchased by Australian users. The Very Fast Train is another area of French technological excellence, and France has recently been taken as a point of reference for Australian planning in this regard.

4.4.3 French and International Trade

Since Australian stereotypes of French tend to focus on France, and even more narrowly upon Paris, there is a danger that the economic significance of the French language may be considered here only in terms of relations between Australia and France. The relative importance of Australian trade with France has diminished somewhat since the 1970s, to the point where only 1.54% of Australia's exports in 1990 went to France. But in the same year, however, 2.04% went to Switzerland, 1.64% to Canada, 0.98% to Belgium-Luxemburg, O.16% to French Polynesia, O.16% to New Caledonia, 0.11% to Algeria, O.07% to Vanuatu, etc. French is, of course, a language which gives entry to all of these markets. As Lo Bianco and Monteil point out, French shares with English alone the fact of having spread beyond the confines of a former colonial empire (1988:50). In a list of official languages in 194 sovereign states given by Stanley et al., one finds the clearest indication of the value of French as a language of international market contact (1990:48-49). From a reading of their table, it is clear that English is by far the most widespread of languages, being nearly three times as important as French in this regard. It has to be added, however, that French, for the number of countries in which it has official status, is more important than all the other LOTEs taken together.

Another table of interest is given in Stanley et al (1990:7). It is reproduced below.

What is striking about the place of French here is that it occupies a much higher rank in the second column that in the first. This is not just because of the continuing post-colonial influence, although that is a factor. It suggests that there are more than three times as many people who are officially deemed to know French as there are mother tongue speakers of the language, a discrepancy far greater than for Spanish or Arabic, for example. When one adds to this the fact that French is a prestigious second language in many countries where it does not have official status, often serving as a mark of the educated elite, it is not hard to see why French is a valuable medium for international exchange of any kind. Of the languages whose official population is greater; Chinese, Hindu and Russian are much more concentrated geographically. Only English and Spanish have a comparable spread, English being once again the strongest of the three.

Mother-tongue Speakers	Official Language Population
1. Chinese (1000)	1. English (1 400)
2. English (350)	2. Chinese (1000)
3. Spanish (250)	3. Hindi (700)
4. Hindi (200)	4. Spanish (280)
5. Arabic (150)	5. Russian (270)
6. Bengali (150)	6. French (220)
7. Russian (150)	7. Arabic (170)
8. Portuguese (135)	8. Portuguese (160)
9. Japanese (120)	9. Malay (160)
10. German (100)	10. Bengali (150)
11. French (70)	11. Japanese (120)
12. Panjabi (70)	12. German (100)
13. Javanese (65)	13. Urdu (85)
14. Bihari (65)	14. Italian (60)
15. Italian (60)	15. Korean (60)
16. Korean (60)	16. Vietnamese (60)
17. Telugu (55)	17. Persian (55)
18. Tamil (55)	18. Tagalog (50)
19. Marathi (50)	19. Thai (50)
20. Vietnamese (50)	20. Turkish (50)

Table 91
The Top Twenty Languages
From Stanley et al (1990:7)

4.5 Australian Trade with France

In a discussion of trade with France, two caveats must be uttered. The first of these has been given in the previous section: France, by itself, is likely to be less important economically to Australia than the range of other places to which French gives efficient access. Secondly, any analysis of trade relations between Australia and France, as of those with Japan, Germany, or Spain, ought to be seen as a study in Australia's relative failure to penetrate non-English-speaking markets in any other way than through bulk sales of commodities. As members of a major Australian delegation remarked recently on the eve of their departure for France, "Australian companies have virtually ignored France up to now" (*Courier-Mail*, 8 April 1992, 31). A closer examination of the Australian-French connection is of interest, nonetheless, not just because it can serve as a reminder or a warning, but because there are some successes among the failures, and these successes point the way to possible future developments.

In general, patterns of trade between Australia and France are all too predictable, with Australian exports to France concentrated in a few areas (notably wool and coal) (*Australia-France Trade and Investment Directory*, 1991:7) and French exports to Australia including a range of high technology equipment and luxury consumer goods. According to the statistics provided by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian exports to France in 1990 had a value of $786m, while imports totalled $1,164m. Curiously, French customs figures show Australian exports as FF 4,733m, and imports as FF 4,824m. The difference between the two is significant, and has been

remarked on by one French commentator (*AFTID*, 7): it may have to do with the year in which certain major imports (such as the Airbus) are deemed to have taken place.

If one considers investment, a more encouraging pattern begins to emerge. Australian investment in France led by Brambles, TNT and Westpac, appears to be on the increase. The EC in general attracts a relatively high proportion of Australian investment, given the volume of trade. In 1988, as Stanley et al. note, 21.7% of Australian overseas investment went to the EC, as against only 4.4% to Japan. A measure of the proportion of this actually going to France does not appear to be available, however. In the other direction, there has been a rapid increase in the last few years in the number of French companies establishing branches in Australia. From about 1950 to 1980, there was approximately one new company setting up in Australia per year. In 1980, the rate increased to about four per annum, and in 1986 increased again to about ten per annum, reaching 14 in 1988, so that the overall number is now nearing 150, having been about 80 as recently as 1986. There are signs that investment and joint venture activity are reshaping economic relations between Australia and France, even though Australia's export performance has not shown signs of general improvement in this area.

◆ The aerospace industry seems a promising area of Franco-Australian co-operation. In 1991, the GIFAS ("Groupement des Industries Françaises Aéronautiques et Spatiales") organised a series of lectures in Sydney, Melbourne, and Canberra, under the heading "French Aerospace 91". The French group was not only seeking to market French equipment in this field, but to enter into technical co-operation arrangements. Such arrangements can lead, for example, to the production in Australia of airframes and other components for construction use in France. In this way, French investment is contributing quite directly to employment, and to the production of value-added exports for Australia. ◆

4.6 Education and Training Needs

Australia's LOTE education needs are twofold. There needs to be sensitisation of the business community to the value of LOTEs, and there must be training in particular LOTEs. Where the first kind of learning takes place among senior members of a company with export interests, the second is likely to follow, in the form of commissioned courses for employees. This practice, as one might expect, seems far more widespread in the United Kingdom and New Zealand than in Australia, although there are signs of increasing activity locally. Watts (1987) attempted to evaluate demand for LOTE intensive courses within New Zealand companies by testing their readiness to fund such courses. He found that commercial demand for Japanese was greatest, with French second, ahead of Spanish and Chinese.

It should be remembered that a further problem may await both business people and language teachers in the future, supposing that there is increasing awareness among business people of the value of language study. Embleton records something of a struggle in the UK, where language specialists like him are urging companies to move beyond what he sees as a

typical response: "a rapid quick-fire decision to lay on some training for a few people" (1992: 10). The argument in Australia, for the moment, must still be about whether any "fixing" is required.

Within formal education systems, efforts have recently been made to provide new opportunities within the French curriculum for business French studies. Business French has been introduced as an HSC subject in NSW and, after a hesitant beginning, now appears to be gathering momentum, at a time when secondary French in the state is being dramatically weakened. In 1990, there were approximately 80 HSC candidates in the subject, and in 1991, about 200. Some French teachers do not appear to welcome this development. Perhaps they fear that business French will no longer have the special appeal that is stereotypically associated with the study of the language in Australia, but the answer to their concern will presumably be found easily enough. Insofar as business French is taught with the same methodological resourcefulness now being displayed by the best teachers of the "traditional" language courses, it can serve to enrich the subject offerings, and remind the community of the range of possible uses of French.

Further training opportunities, for those wishing to learn commercial and industrial uses of French and other LOTEs, can be developed through a national programme of internship exchanges. The French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Australia receives a steady flow of enquiries from French business students, and from recent graduates, in search of opportunities to spend training periods in Australian companies. Where opportunities for internships in Australia are made available to French students, there is an expectation that corresponding opportunities will open up for young Australians, thus helping to create a pool of young business people who are functionally bilingual within their chosen field. The very existence of such a scheme, together with explicit policies for sustaining and developing French teaching in Australia, would serve to encourage investment from companies based in French-speaking countries.

Appendix A References and Selected Bibliography

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Appendix B Colleagues Consulted

In the course of preparing this report, we consulted with the following people whom we thank for their valued time and help: -

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Gary Chittick, School of Economics and Public Policy, Faculty of Business, Queensland University of Technology
Michael Connon, Department of Modern Languages, University of Newcastle
Yves Corbel, Alliance Française, Sydney
Hilary Dixon, Board of School Studies, NSW
Robert Emeras, French Embassy, Canberra
Michelle Endicott, Macaulay College, Brisbane
Eva Fairweather, St. Catherine's School, Melbourne
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Claude Foulon, French Chamber of Commerce, Sydney
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Sonja Kokot, Mansfield State High School, Brisbane
Lauriston Girls' School, Melbourne, French Staff
Barry Leal, University of Southern Queensland
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Diane Longland, President, MLTA, NSW
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Flinders University (School of Humanities)
La Trobe University (Department of French)
University of Melbourne (Department of French)
Monash University (Department of Romance Languages)
University of NSW (Department of French)
Sydney University (Department of French Studies)

Appendix C Attitudinal Survey Form and Results

THE NATIONAL LANGUAGES & LITERACY INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA

KEY LANGUAGES PROJECT

LANGUAGE STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

For information contact Athol Yates, National Language and Literacy Institute of Australia. 112 Wellington Parade, East Melbourne Vic 3002
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Name of School_____
State:
Type of school: [ ] State
[ ] Catholic
[ ] Independent

Part A: Student Profile

1. Sex [ ] Male [ ] Female

2. If you were not born in Australia, at what age did you come to Australia? _____

From which country did you come?_____

3. What level of education did your parents reach? *(Tick only one box for each parent)*

	Father	Mother
Primary	[ ]	[ ]
Post primary	[ ]	[ ]
Year 12	[ ]	[ ]
Undergraduate degree	[ ]	[ ]
Post graduate degree	[ ]	[ ]
Other	[ ]	[ ]

Please specify
Mother: _____
Father:_____

Part B: Language background

4. Which language other than English is used at home? *(Tick only one box)*

[ ]	French	[ ]	Spanish
[ ]	German	[ ]	Italian
[ ]	Indonesian	[ ]	An Italian dialect
[ ]	Malay	[ ]	Arabic
[ ]	Mandarin Chinese	[ ]	Japanese
[ ]	Cantonese	[ ]	Other language
[ ]	Other Chinese dialect		Please specify_____
Please specify_____	_____	[ ]	English only

5. Do you speak this language with: *(You can tick more than one box)*

❒	Mother	❒	Grandparents
❒	Father	❒	Other relatives
❒	Brothers and sisters	❒	People from your parents' country
❒	Other Please specify_____		

6. What subjects are you studying at school this year?

_____
_____
_____

7. To which level do you intend to study? *(Tick only one box)*

[ ] Year 11
[ ] Year 12
[ ] TAFE
[ ] Tertiary institution

Part C: Language study at school

All of the following questions are about languages other than English, but do not refer to Latin.

8. Did you study a language at school (including Saturday School or Ethnic School) when you were in Year 10?

[ ] Yes [ ] No

(If you answered "No", this is the last question for you.)

9. Which language or languages did you study at Year 10?

Language 1: (Specify)_____

Language 2: (Specify)_____

(Questions 10 to 13 will be about the language you named as Language 1, questions 14 to 17 will be about the language you named as Language 2.)

10. If you discontinued Language 1 after Year 10, which of the following factors contributed to your decision?

[ ] I did not wish to continue. *(You can tick more than one box)*

This was because

- ❒ I do not like languages
- ❒ There were too many native speakers in the class
- ❒ The subject was too difficult
- ❒ My friends did not take this language
- ❒ I did not like the teacher
- ❒ Other reasons

Please specify_____
_____

[ ] I would have liked to continue, however ... *(You can tick more than one box)*

- ❒ The language was not available
- ❒ I considered other subjects more important for my overall study plan.
- ❒ There were time table clashes with other subjects
- ❒ Other reasons

Please specify_____
_____

11. If you are studying Language 1 this year, how important were the following factors for your decision to continue? Rate your answers on a scale from 1 = "not important" to 5 = "very important".

Ethnic origin and /or religion 1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

Contact with the ethnic community in Australia which speaks Language 1 1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

Other contact with the country where the language is spoken (past travel, friends, parents' work, etc.)
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I thought this would be an easy subject for me. 1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I had good marks in the past. 1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I like studying languages. 1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I like studying about the culture and society of the country where the language is spoken.
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I particularly like the teacher. 1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I do not have definite plans for the future but I feel the language would enhance my future career prospects.
1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I have definite plans to work in an area of employment where the language is used. 1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I want to travel or live in the country. 1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I have been advised to continue by my family. 1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

I have been advised to continue by my teachers. 1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

One or more of my friends was taking the subject. 1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

Although I had no strong desire to continue, other subjects were even less attractive. 1__2__3__4__5
not important very important

Other factors
Please specify: _____

12. To which level do you intend to study Language 1? *(Tick only one box)*

[ ] Year 11
[ ] Year 12
[ ] TAFE
[ ] Tertiary institution

13. How do you rate your ability to use Language 1?

	Poor	Good	Very Good	Fluent
Speaking	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Listening comprehension	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Writing	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Reading	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

If the language has a different script from English, how do you find using the writing system.

1__2__3__4__5
very easy very difficult

The following questions will be answered by students who studied two languages (not including Latin) in Year 10.

14. If you discontinued Language 2 after Year 10, which of the following factors contributed to your decision?

[ ] I did not wish to continue. *(You can tick more than one box)*

This was because

- ❒ I do not like languages
- ❒ There were too many native speakers in the class
- ❒ The subject was too difficult
- ❒ My friends did not take this language
- ❒ I did not like the teacher
- ❒ Other reasons

Please specify_____
_____

[ ] I would have liked to continue, however ... *(You can tick more than one box)*

- ❒ The language was not available
- ❒ I considered other subjects more important for my overall study plan.
- ❒ There were time table clashes with other subjects
- ❒ Other reasons

Please specify_____
_____

15. If you are studying Language 2 this year, how important were the following factors for your decision to continue? Rate your answers on a scale from 1 = "not important" to 5 = "very important".

Ethnic origin and /or religion	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
Contact with the ethnic community in Australia which speaks Language 2	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
Other contact with the country where the language is spoken (past travel, friends, parents' work, etc.)	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I thought this would be an easy subject for me.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I had good marks in the past.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I like studying languages.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I like studying about the culture and society of the country where the language is spoken.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I particularly like the teacher.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I do not have definite plans for the future but I feel the language would enhance my future career prospects.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I have definite plans to work in an area of employment where the language is used.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I want to travel or live in the country.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I have been advised to continue by my family.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
I have been advised to continue by my teachers.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
One or more of my friends was taking the subject.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important
Although I had no strong desire to continue, other subjects were even less attractive.	1__2__3__4__5 not important very important

Other factors
Please specify: _____

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16. To which level do you intend to study Language 2? *(Tick only one box)*

[ ] Year 11
[ ] Year 12
[ ] TAFE
[ ] Tertiary institution

17. How do you rate your ability to use Language 2?

	Poor	Good	Good	Very Fluent
Speaking	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Listening comprehension	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Writing	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Reading	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

If the language has a different script from English, how do you find using the writing system.

1__2__3__4__5
very easy very difficult

End of questionnaire **Thank you for your cooperation.**

THE NATIONAL LANGUAGES & LITERACY INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA

Language & Literacy Publications

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Volume 3: French

If, by some historical accident, French had never been studied in the past in Australia, and were now to appear as a new candidate for a place in Australian education, it would undoubtedly be seen by modern policy-makers as one of the languages most deserving of "wider teaching", and might well attract special support from the most vigorous curriculum reformers. It ranks high on every list of "trade languages"; it is, with English, one of the two working languages of the UN; it is undeniably the most important legal and administrative language of the European Community, and it functions for many Australian artists and intellectuals as a medium of strong cultural influence and exchange. Yet these qualities are not always readily perceived by those Australians who, having "done French at school", might still think fondly of it from time to time, but all too often locate it in the past.

It is not easy to summarise the overall position of French in Australia in the 1990s. In some places, and at some levels, French is positively thriving, and even reaching new levels of popularity with students. In independent schools throughout the country, it continues to play an eminent role. In Catholic education, where it has not had the same historical importance, it shows a tendency to expand in certain areas, especially at the primary level. In state secondary schools, especially where perceptions based on an opposition between Asian and European languages have had a stronger impact, its position is much weaker than at the time of the 1987 National Policy on Languages. Victoria is the notable exception to this trend, with New South Wales the most striking example of it. In adult education, notably Alliance Française courses and the TV Open Learning Project, French is attracting quite remarkable numbers of students. The Profile examines the past and present of French in Australia, its importance in education, and its significance to Australia's commercial, political and cultural relationships with the world.

Profiles of 9 Languages of Wider Teaching

The Nine Languages

The nine languages featured in these profile studies were categorised as Languages of Wider Teaching. The nine languages are: Arabic, Modern Standard Chinese, French, German, Modern Greek, Indonesian/Malay, Italian, Japanese and Spanish.

These languages represent the vast bulk of the second language learning effort in Australian education. As such, these languages consume the greatest proportion of the resources devoted to the teaching of second languages in this country and will do so for several years to come. These nine were selected for reasons of domestic importance, such as community bilingualism and equal educational opportunities for minority language speakers, and international importance, such as economic and political significance.

Background

The nine languages were designated Languages of Wider Teaching by the 1987 National Policy on Languages. Resources were provided to promote the teaching of these languages and in early 1990, the Australian Advisory Council on Languages and Multicultural Education, which was charged with the responsibility for the implementation of the National Policy on Languages, decided to review their progress since 1987. These 9 languages have now been incorporated into the 14 Priority Languages of the Australian Language and Literacy Policy expanding the priority list to include Aboriginal languages, Korean, Russian, Thai and Vietnamese.

The Profiles

The 9 Profiles represent more than a review of the state of play of these languages. The studies promise to bring about a more precise and language-specific form of planning for the teaching and learning of languages in Australia and therefore could well represent a more mature phase in policy making itself. In recent years, language policies have made only generic statements about individual languages or groups of languages. Since there is now a high level of consensus across Australia about the importance of language study, these Profiles will shift the focus to particular issues that affect individual languages.

Who Will Use These Profiles?

These Profiles will be invaluable to all people involved in language and business. Specifically, users will include language policy makers and planners, teachers, lecturers, the media, business associations and researchers.

Uses

The Profiles will be used for planning school and higher education programs, curriculum writing, research, estimating needs in interpreting and translating, and estimating the needs of business to target overseas markets. They will be of continuing value as a stocktake of the 9 studied languages but also of value to the methodology of profiling. The NLLIA intends to study other languages in this same way.